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NOTES OF THE WEEK

PARLIAMENT resumed quietly this week after the short Easter recess; the House of Commons is often seen in its best and most business-like mood when discussing the national health, which is not a party matter. On Wednesday it returned to the Budget with a debate on beer—a subject which for some reason not apparent to the outside world is always regarded as a species of comic relief. The real fight on the Budget is still to come.

It is a convenience to have a straight fight between Conservative and Socialist, between Empire Free Trade and Snowden finance, at the Fulham by-election. From that point of view the Liberals are to be thanked for not running a candidate, and the Socialists probably feel the same about the Communist, who has withdrawn because he cannot raise the deposit money. (This property qualification for candidates, which has

taken the place of property qualifications in voters, strikes me as an abuse which may one day produce awkward results.)

But from their own point of view the Liberals have certainly made a mistake in not contesting Fulham. No doubt it conserves the famous Lloyd George fund, which is understood to be considerably less flourishing than it was. But if the Liberal headquarters is to consult the convenience of its Socialist masters whenever a by-election comes along, the electors will soon recognize the Liberal Party—Lloyd George and Runciman wings alike—as a mere annexe of Labour.

Mr. Ramsay Muir and Mr. Geoffrey Shakespeare have both advised Fulham Liberals to vote Socialist. These two politicians, in spite or perhaps because of their intimate association with Mr. Lloyd George, have both undergone various vicissitudes in the past. And if there is, in their opinion, so little difference between Liberalism

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and Socialism at Fulham, the electors in their own constituencies may be forgiven for thinking there is equally little difference elsewhere when it comes to voting for them or for a Labour candidate at the next election.

As a consumer, my natural instincts are rather in favour of the Government's project of strengthening the Food Council. Up to the present its bark has been worse than its bite, and profiteers pay little enough attention to Councils with toothless gums. The idea behind the Food Council is, of course, that of a fair price—a piece of medieval Toryism which has won its way back to favour in the last few years, when the world has had so much bitter experience of unfair prices.

The professional economists, of course, are all against any interference or control. But the world does not take the Professors of Economics as seriously as its Professors of Medicine and Physics and Astronomy, for the simple reason that practical experience shows that, as often as not, they are wrong. Perhaps their conclusions would be more to the point if they had some actual, instead of merely theoretic knowledge of business.

However that may be, the Government's attitude will be watched with interest and a certain amount of sympathy. But it seems to me idle for the Government's supporters at one and the same time to talk (a) about Free Trade, (b) guaranteeing the farmer's wheat prices, and (c) fixing a fair price for the consumer. Whichever way you look at it, the first is Liberalism and Cobdenism, the second and third are Protection. And in the world as it is at present constituted, you cannot have things both ways.

There has been some very natural anxiety as to the Government's attitude on Egypt, and it was rather freely rumoured last week that Mr. Henderson, after a temporary weakening, had again stiffened his attitude. Commander Kenworthy, who in this matter is probably rather to the right than the left angle of Labour, explains elsewhere in this issue what in his opinion should be the attitude of his party; and it need hardly be said that members of the Opposition who have not yet forgotten Mr. Henderson's dismissal of Lord Lloyd—will be inclined to scrutinize any agreement that may be made even more carefully than Mr. Kenworthy.

Lord Irwin has shown himself a miracle of patience, but now that he has decided that the seditionists, whether inspired by Gandhi or acting on orders from Moscow, must be dealt with, it is discovered once again that it is a grave mistake to interpret toleration as a weakness. The best commentary on Mr. Patel's letters to the Viceroy and impudent statement that Great Britain never yields with a good grace, is the record of the past few months and the action now taken. The boot is on the other leg. Nor will any wrong be inflicted on India by the revival and strengthening of the Press Laws. Papers required to put up monetary guarantees of good behaviour have promptly suspended publication. Talk of Mussoliniism is fatuous nonsense.

Lord Olivier's Royal Empire Society speech on the West Indian Sugar Crisis was economically the soundest and patriotically the most moving which the crisis has yet produced. It cannot be dismissed as the outpouring of a reactionary Imperialist. Do you prefer to have cheaper sugar or to preserve your oldest colonies? is the basic question Lord Olivier puts. Self-interest, apart from sentiment, alone should provide the answer. Destroy the sugar industry in the West Indies, and there go with it orders for British goods worth £7,000,000. Worse still, we should run up a sugar bill to the United States, and as Lord Olivier says, "we have enough American bills to meet" already.

It is confidently stated that the case of the Bishop of Birmingham and the incumbent whom he refused to license will be discussed in the near future in the House of Lords. In view of the difficulty of the issues involved, and the very natural confusion in the public mind as to the precise significance of the recent legal proceedings, this would probably be the most convenient and useful course. The attitude of Dr. Barnes has, in fact, puzzled many laymen who are not well informed as to the niceties of ecclesiastical law, and it is to be added that the position of the Bishop of Truro in what appears to be, so far as he is concerned, an extra-diocesan matter, has puzzled a good many more.

Dr. Barnes is, it is understood, respected rather than loved by his ecclesiastical colleagues, and some of them are also believed to hold that the Bishop of Truro would gain rather than lose were he to maintain his principles with less rigidity. How far these views are justified the ordinary layman is not in a position to say; but a debate in the calm atmosphere of the House of Lords on the questions of principle involved can hardly fail to throw light on a dispute that has so far proved more interesting than intelligible.

The proposed compromise between the Government and the Church schools appears on the face of it to be fair, and likely to be accepted as a workable arrangement. With the increasing cost of educational salaries and equipment, the Church schools can no longer raise the necessary funds, but they are an integral and valuable part of the education system, and on their record are entitled to sympathetic consideration.

The Government is now to contribute towards the cost, in exchange for a measure of control. Both contribution and control will naturally tend to increase as the years pass, and it is to be presumed that provided and non-provided schools will gravitate towards a common pattern. Something is lost as well as gained by the change, but there seems no reason as yet to fear that the sectarian passions and jealousies of twenty years ago will be let loose again.

The London Chamber of Commerce is to be congratulated upon the excellent report of its committee on the expense of litigation, and I hope that the Lord Chancellor (to whom a copy has been officially sent) will find that the subjects dealt with in this report are more fit for his attention.

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tion than the Coal Bill, which any peer could have introduced into the House of Lords. Protests against the excessive cost of litigation are increasing, but our Courts of Law and our lawyers do not move. However, idleness is staring the judges in the face and poverty haunts the lawyers.

Idleness may not be unpleasant to the Bench, but poverty is distinctly uncomfortable for the Bar. The report aptly describes our present legal procedure—and it is our procedure, not our judges or lawyers, that is at fault—as “an expensive luxury and beyond the means of the majority of people, unless they are either very poor or very rich.” The authors liken the situation to a would-be purchaser of a motor-car, who was told that he could have only a Rolls or a Daimler. He would agree that both were the best cars in the world, but he would abstain from buying either on the ground of expense.

We were taught in our youth that an island is a piece of land entirely surrounded by water, and it seemed a reasonably satisfactory definition. But some pernickety person recently raised a difficulty before the League of Nations that nobody had ever thought of before, and the international lawyers have been looking up their principles and precedents. The question was, not the size of the land but the amount of water necessary.

The United States claimed that an island is an island if it is uncovered at low tide. Great Britain, on the contrary, insisted that it must still be uncovered at normal high-water; on the principle, presumably, that to be solvent you must keep your head above water all the time. In spite of the high authority of Mr. Micawber, who would certainly have disagreed with the British attitude, and a few examples of “islands” in the United Kingdom which are thereby disqualified, the British contention seems on the whole the more satisfactory, and the League of Nations has advised its adoption. Let us hope that Mr. Hearst will not see anything sinister in the episode.

Feminists all over the world will have cause to regret the death of General Primo de Rivera now that his successor has taken away from the women of Spain the right to vote which he gave them. In actual fact, this retrograde step was inevitable, for once it was decided to revert to the Constitution of 1876 no other course was possible, for under that fundamental law women had not the franchise.

To regain their lost rights the Spanish women will now have to wait for the convocation of a Constituent Assembly, and I doubt if this can take place for another eighteen months at least. It is, indeed, a curious irony of fate that a so-called democratic system should actually deprive a large section of the population of the political freedom which was accorded to it by a dictator.

The gradual transference of the entire Russian Navy from the Baltic to the Black Sea is hardly calculated to render any easier the conclusion of a naval agreement between the Mediterranean Powers, and yet that has been clearly shown by the recent Conference to be an indispensable

preliminary to further disarmament. At the moment, it is not too much to say that the Balkan nations are alarmed, and it is easy to sympathize with their fears.

The Russian fleet has never been a very formidable proposition, and I do not imagine that its efficiency has been enhanced under Bolshevik rule, but it does nevertheless include at least two super-dreadnoughts, and it should be in a position, if assured of a free passage through the Dardanelles, to dominate the Aegean in the absence of British, French, or Italian warships. In effect, this transference is disquieting, and unless Mr. Henderson can bring pressure to bear on his friends at Moscow, it may well affect the whole Mediterranean situation ere long.

“It is surely a very bitter thing that this University, which is founded on a tradition of athletic supremacy, and once defeated Cambridge with seven men, should consider it a fine and tremendous thing to put up a good fight at all.” I was astonished to read the above quotation from the *Isis*; one had hitherto supposed that the University was originally established with a view to mental rather than physical excellence. Perhaps the Oxford school of history have discovered a new charter, given by Alfred the Great in the intervals between burning cakes, to encourage athletic supremacy in those traditional days.

Almost as regularly as the letters from country rectories announcing the arrival of the cuckoo there appear at this time of year in a certain section of the Press statements to the effect that the coming season is to be the most brilliant since the war. Quite apart from the highly questionable accuracy of this claim, I cannot for the life of me understand how the news can interest the readers of the papers concerned, but I suppose their editors know their own business best.

Upon one point, however, I am prepared to break a lance with them, and it is with regard to the repeated assertion that the London Season begins with the first night of the Covent Garden Opera. It is at least twenty years since opera was fashionable, in the social sense, in this country, and to ignore the fact is deliberately to lead Balham astray, which, to say the least of it, is very unkind.

The death of Hugh Spender was a shock. He was a charming fellow and good stable companion, whose chief misfortune in life was to be overshadowed by his more famous brother. His novels were not, I suppose, immortal literature. But I read them all—in hospital, as it happens, when one is probably difficult to please—and enjoyed every page. One feels that he hardly had the recognition he deserved.

The critics were agreed that the Australians are not a great cricket team, but in the first match—always a difficult one for the visitors—they were much too good for Worcestershire. Mr. Baldwin's county is not, it is true, the champion; but from the way the Australians got going almost at once it is clear that our leading teams will have to exert themselves.

A NEW CONSERVATIVE PROGRAMME—I

ON the morrow of the reassembling of Parliament for a Session which is certain to be marked by many a bitter fight between the Government and its critics, the moment would appear to be propitious for an examination of the programme and principles of the Conservative Party. We therefore propose, during the course of the next few weeks, to discuss in some detail the policy which in our opinion is most suited to advance the cause of Conservatism at the present juncture, though confining our observations and criticisms solely to the line that should be adopted, and refraining from any suggestions as to the individuals by whom the destinies of the party should be guided. At the close of this investigation it is our intention to invite certain prominent representatives of the various schools of Conservative thought to express their opinions upon our conclusions, and in this way we trust that we may assist the formulation of a programme that will carry the Conservative Party to victory at the next General Election, whenever that event may take place.

We are adopting such a course from the firm conviction that it is quite useless for the party to expect to bring about the defeat of Socialism without being in possession of a definite alternative policy covering all the outstanding problems of the day. For our own part, we yield to none in our belief that many of the economic difficulties, by which the nation is faced at the present time, would disappear upon the adoption of that measure of Protection which Lord Beaverbrook has so wisely and so truly called by the name of Empire Free Trade. Nevertheless, even the success of that policy would not in itself prove sufficient, as no one knows better than its author, to remedy all the ills of the body politic, and Lord Rothermere's alternative and perhaps rival programme does in fact recognize this limitation. It so happens that for various reasons we disagree with some of the main planks of Lord Rothermere's platform, but he is at least entitled to public recognition for having seen the necessity of a comprehensive policy, mistaken though we may hold it to be both in direction and detail.

A great many years have passed since the late Marquess of Salisbury declared that "the commonest error in politics is sticking to the carcasses of dead policies," and yet it is to be feared that the truth of the great statesman's observation has not always been appreciated by Conservatives. Too often they are inclined to regard their party as little more than a brake upon the wheel of progress, and they are content if they can delay for a few years some reform, which in their own hearts they know to be inevitable. That was not the function which was assigned to their party by the greatest of its leaders, by Canning and Disraeli, and it is not the one which is advocated by the more far-sighted Conservatives of to-day. Indeed, if the party is to adopt no other strategy than to wait until it is attacked by its opponents, it will meet with the fate of all armies that are content to remain permanently on the defensive. Such has been the lot of the parties of the Right in more than one foreign country. They thought to serve as an antidote to the views of the Left,

without being under the necessity of propounding any very definite policy of their own, and by their negative attitude they have forfeited public esteem. Within a generation of its foundation, the *république conservatrice* of M. Thiers found its destinies in the hands of Radicals and anti-clericals, and the lesson is one that should be taken to heart by English Conservatives.

At the same time, we are by no means the advocates of merely discarding the policy of "safety first" in favour of that known as "dishing the Whigs." It is, as the experience of the last few years has clearly shown, quite useless to outbid Labour in the matter of promises, and it is a subject for regret that the attempt should have been made. In 1867 Lord Derby arrayed the Conservative Party in clothes stolen from its adversaries, and the result was disastrous. The Socialist remedy for the ills of democracy is more democracy, but that is a doctrine to which no Conservative can subscribe without qualification, and in this respect the division between the parties is fundamental.

In short, to conquer, the Conservative Party must return to its own first principles rather than make any attempt to steal the thunder of its opponents. Socialism is based upon the theory of the class-war, and its advocates differ only as regards the methods by which the campaign should be conducted. That, for example, is the real point at issue between the present Government and its critics of the Independent Labour Party. Mr. MacDonald and Mr. Snowden believe in allowing the capitalist to be bled to death by excessive taxation, while Mr. Maxton prefers some more rapid method of execution; but as to the end in view, namely, the supremacy of one class of the community over the others, they are in complete agreement. Against this there is set the principle that the interests of the nation as a whole come before those of any section of it, and upon this it is our opinion that the Conservative Party should take its stand. There is room and to spare in the British Empire for the co-operation of all classes for the national good, but the triumph of any one of them has always proved injurious to the best interests of the State, whether it were the Crown, the aristocracy, or what is known as "big business." The principle upon which any Conservative programme must be based can only be that the interests of the nation as a whole should be paramount.

As a necessary corollary to this the balance of the Constitution must be restored. Its maintenance was the guiding principle of Canning's life, and it is only of recent years that his successors have exhibited an indifference which to-day is dangerous in the extreme. The decline of the power of the Crown, the Parliament Act of 1911, the increasing recourse to the expert, who is outside the Constitution altogether, and, in these latter days, the appearance of a three-party system, have all combined to upset a balance that it should be the task of the Conservative Party to restore. To effect this there is not the slightest necessity, as we hope to prove at no distant date, to put back the clock; but rather is it essential to take stock of the forces which are operative to-day, and to co-ordinate them in the national interest, within the frame-work of the existing Constitution. Whether we like the fact or not, it has to

be admitted that to all intents and purposes we are living under a Single Chamber system, and that the checks upon the Executive and upon the House of Commons are imposed by bodies unknown to the Constitution, such as the Press and the great confederations of Capital and Labour. The restoration of this lost balance is essential if the rights and liberty of the individual citizen are to be protected, and the danger of revolution, in whatever form, avoided; in short, in those national interests which it is the peculiar duty of Conservatism to cherish and to defend.

SECOND THOUGHTS ON THE BUDGET

THE Budget has found few friends. The Socialists who hoped for a real attempt at a redistribution of wealth are loud in their protests and the Liberals, who really have earned some reward, are fobbed off with the jam to-morrow of the promised Land Valuation Bill. But the Budget has also found few enemies. Mr. Churchill has indeed attacked it with point and vigour, but the suspicion of personal animus has robbed his speech of its effect. At present the chances are that the Finance Bill will be passed grumbly into law.

This is not at all as it should be. The Conservative Party should by now have so far recovered from the shock of eleven months ago as to be able to seize the golden opportunity with which Mr. Snowden has presented it. Mr. Churchill's Budgets were not masterpieces, but at least they conformed to financial and political realities. They aimed at fostering the accumulation of new wealth with a view both to the redemption of debt and the provision of employment. These were sound canons, defensible in Parliament, intelligible to the public. Mr. Snowden has violated both.

Raising the income-tax is like governing in a state of siege. It is perfectly easy until you begin to ask what is going to happen afterwards. That is a question which every Chancellor of the Exchequer should put to himself, and if Mr. Snowden puts it he may well shudder at the answer. Broadly speaking, the Budget raids the national savings to the tune of £30,000,000. The actual incidence of the new income-tax, surtax and death duties is not really open to doubt. Except in the case of the comparatively few taxpayers who just, but only just, come in for an extra squeeze, the new burdens will not be met by reducing expenditure. They will be met out of the fund available for new investment—the fund which, if rightly husbanded, would provide the cash for the conversion of the great War Loan and for the rationalization of our depressed industries.

Capitalism, like every other form of economic organization, has its defects. But it has one supreme merit. It concentrates the profits of enterprise in the hands of those most willing and best able to use them in the furtherance of other enterprise. It is for this reason that the wants of mankind are to-day supplied in greater quantity and wider variety than ever before in history, and it is for this reason that Marx's prediction that the rich would only get richer by making the poor get

poorer has been transparently and absolutely falsified. There is, however, one certain way of injuring our economic structure in its best feature and that is by diverting to current expenditure the fund accumulated for new investment. This is the way that Mr. Snowden has taken.

It is a way that may not unreasonably be taken in a tremendous but passing emergency, such as a great war, but it is the worst possible way to take when the vital demands of reconstruction should have precedence over everything. All these millions so smugly taken are diverted from the loan which would lower our present rate of debt-interest by 1 per cent., or from the industrial re-equipment which alone can reduce unemployment. Penny wise, pound foolish, says the proverb. When the penny is represented by £30,000,000, the total of Mr. Snowden's folly is indeed appalling to contemplate.

TWO PARTIES, OR THREE, OR MORE?—II

By A. A. B.

ON the declaration of war in 1914 John Morley said to Professor J. H. Morgan: "Asquith will not be the pilot to weather the storm." He was right in that, though all his other prophesies about men and events were wrong. Halfway through the war, in December, 1916, Asquith was forced to resign by a plot, headed by Lloyd George, Balfour, Carson, Curzon and Bonar Law. Mr. Lloyd George formed a Coalition with the Tories, without the Asquithian Liberals, which he led through the Hang-the-Kaiser Election to his *coupon d'état*. He became Prime Minister, but broke up the Liberal Party. The Irish Nationalist Party was submerged in the terrible deeds of the Irish rebellion of 1920, and Mr. Lloyd George fell from power in 1922 after the signing of the treaty with Griffith and Collins. The Lloyd Georgian Coalition was destroyed at the Carlton Club meeting by a Tory revolt led by Mr. Baldwin, Sir Samuel Hoare, Colonel Gretton, and Lord Younger, and supported by the bulk of the party, who were disgusted by the Irish Treaty, and tired of Mr. Lloyd George's foreign adventures. Mr. Bonar Law, already in bad health, reluctantly consented to form a Government, and dissolved Parliament. There went to the country in this election three parties, the Conservatives, the Socialists and the Liberals. The country gave Mr. Bonar Law a majority over the other two parties of 79, on the Tranquillity ticket. It was a larger majority than Lord Beaconsfield secured in 1874, but it did not satisfy Mr. Baldwin, who suddenly became Prime Minister on the retirement and death of Mr. Bonar Law in 1923. Before Mr. Baldwin's vision there floated the triumph of a great Protectionist Minister, and, determined to get a mandate from the electors to that effect, he dissolved Parliament in 1923 on the issue of a Tariff. The result was such a rebuff as would have ruined the career of any statesman but Mr. Baldwin, and would have ruined his had there been anybody to take his place. The Conservative majority disappeared, and the three parties were returned without any one having an absolute majority over the two others, the numbers being Conservatives 259, Labour 191 and Liberal 159. It will be observed by the student of Parliamentary statistics that the Labour Party had grown from two in the 1900 Parliament to 191 in 1923. This consideration

probably, for no other can be discerned, induced Mr. Asquith to throw the casting vote of the Liberal Party into the Labour scale, thus placing in office for the first time Mr. Ramsay MacDonald and his Socialists. Whether he was right or wrong in so doing from the point of view of the State, Mr. Asquith certainly ruined what remained of the Liberal Party. The Zinovieff Letter and the abandoned prosecution of a Communist agitator caused a conjunction of Conservatives and Liberals in October, 1924, with the result that at the General Election there were returned 413 Conservatives, 40 Liberals and 151 Socialists. This gave Mr. Baldwin a majority of 211, which he had done nothing to deserve, and which he used in the following five years to give votes to flappers and pensions to widows. At the General Election of last year the situation of 1923 was reproduced with this difference, that neither Conservatives nor Socialists got a clear majority, but the Socialists were the largest of the three parties, being 287 to 260 Conservatives, with 59 Liberals and 9 Independents. That is the position to-day. The Parliamentary key is once more returned to the hand of the Liberals, and is being used by Mr. Lloyd George as in former years it was used by Mr. Parnell, namely, to hold the balance between the two other parties, and to endeavour to make the best bargain for himself out of either.

This situation seems to me to be pernicious to the system of Parliamentary government. It creates uncertainty; large issues are blurred; and the government is carried on by what Disraeli used to call "transactions": in other words, bargains about public affairs of a more or less corrupt nature. For instance, Mr. Lloyd George, having spent a very large sum in running 500 candidates and only securing 59 seats, has conceived the idea of altering the method of Parliamentary election in such a way as to increase the representation of the Liberal Party. He wants what is called electoral reform, either by proportional representation, or second ballot, or the transferable vote. He therefore bargains with Mr. Ramsay MacDonald that he will either vote for Labour measures which he does not approve, or abstain from voting against them, in consideration of the early introduction by the Government of a Bill for electoral reform. The arrangement is vicious, and the object to be obtained, in my judgment, is a novel and dangerous innovation in the British constitution. I am all in favour of the regimentation of political parties, before whom leaders on both sides must clearly place the issues which they have chosen, and which the electors are quite incapable of choosing. Nobody wants half a dozen microphones to be set up which shall echo in Parliament the views of various sections, who for the purpose of government ought to be ignored, that is to say, if they cannot obtain the ventilation of their views either through the Press, or the platform, or the members of one of two great parties. There are those, it is true, who defend the present three-party system by saying that a minority holding the scales can prevent either of the big parties from doing any harm, a view which recalls the famous saying of Sir William Harcourt that in English politics you can do very little good and very little harm. This, of course, is a cynical view, and if the object be to prevent legislation, there is much to be said for it, although it would certainly be extended logically to the formation of five, or six, or even more, parties, as we see them in the French and German Parliaments. But a cynical view of imperial politics will not wear. The issues are too important and too diverse. How long the present Liberal Party will resist bifurcation we shall be better able to judge after the Fulham election next week, when we shall see whether the Liberals lean more to the right

or to the left. But absorption Liberals must make up their mind to sooner or later. A year ago I advocated a junction *pro hac vice* of the two anti-Socialist parties. The opportunity which Mr. Baldwin refused Mr. Ramsay MacDonald has seized, for the time being. If the majority of the Liberal Party are Socialists let them join that party, and let the remnant join the Conservatives. Let us have done with these "understandings" and temporary alliances, which will paralyse the honest and effective working of representative government. The present system may be great fun for Mr. Lloyd George, but it certainly is not so for anyone else. The Conservatives would be well advised not to touch the heresy of Proportional Representation, or any of its complicated devices. Unless they have lost all political sense they will vote against an Electoral Reform Bill, and the Trades Dispute Bill, which proposes to restore the compulsory Trade Unionist levy. If the Liberals will not assist them to turn the Government out on either of these issues, they will be obliged to wait until Mr. Lloyd George has been paid his price, and is ready for a General Election. This is a humiliating position, which is due partly to universal suffrage, and partly to deficient Conservative statesmanship.

THE BRITISH EMPIRE AND THE SUEZ CANAL

BY LIEUT.-COMMANDER THE HON. J. M. KENWORTHY, R.N., M.P.

WHENEVER Egypt is mentioned and the British occupation of the ancient land of the Pharaohs considered, the average Englishman, and, still more, the politically minded Australian or New Zealander, thinks of the Suez Canal.

There may have been difficulties in the recent negotiations between Mr. Henderson and the Delegation headed by Nahas Pasha, over the Sudan or the safety of the mixed foreign populations of Alexandria and Cairo. But these questions do not worry the ordinary voter here or in the Antipodes so much as the safety of that vital channel of salt water connecting the Mediterranean with the Indian Ocean and the Pacific.

It has, indeed, been described as the backbone of the British Empire. If a great range of mountains had stretched across the land neck between Palestine and Egypt, preventing the cutting of this famous deep-water channel, nothing is more certain than that we would not be in Egypt to-day, and that the Union Jack would not fly side by side with the Egyptian national flag in the Sudan.

All political parties, both in England and in the Dominions, are agreed that the Suez Canal must be safeguarded for British war vessels and merchant ships, whatever the condition of the world. One day the responsibility for this and other international waterways will be shouldered by a strengthened League of Nations; but, in the meantime, British public opinion would not be content to see any international body entrusted with the guardianship of this vital Imperial link.

Nevertheless, there is a good deal of misconception as to the problem of the defence of the Canal.

When the Ottoman Empire reached down to the edge of the Sinai Desert and within a few marches of the waterway, and when Turkey was still a formidable military Power, especially with the might of the German arms behind her, the defence of the Canal was largely military. This is not so to-day. The whole situation has been altered by the break-up of the Turkish Empire and by the assumption by Britain of the Mandate for Palestine.

Yet the old military policy continues by its momentum. Ideas change slowly in Whitehall; and the most the Egyptians can hope for just now is that the British garrisons will be moved from Cairo and Alexandria to the Canal itself.

British regiments are to be stationed at various points along the Canal, trees and olive groves are to be planted, recreation grounds laid out, club-houses and canteens built, in order to make life endurable for our soldiers.

But if the pinch comes, the serious threat to the Canal can only come from the sea; and the problem of its defence is to-day purely a naval one. For who can attack it seriously? The Bedouin tribes of the desert in the Wahibi brotherhood under Ibn Sa'ud, King of the Nejd and of Mecca, might raid it; but they would be held in check by the aeroplanes and armoured cars of the Royal Air Force long before they reached the Canal zone. Nor would they desire to raid it. If war broke out affecting the Middle East, Ibn Sa'ud's men would far rather declare a Holy War and invade Iraq, or even Palestine. For then the Canal itself has no attractions. Turkey, as stated above, is out of the picture.

Apart from solemn Treaties of Alliances arising out of the recent negotiations, the Egyptians themselves might possibly make some trouble if diplomacy on both sides were so clumsy as to precipitate a quarrel between us. But we should have plenty of notice, extra forces could be rushed to the spot by sea, and a far greater reprisal would be to cut off Egypt's very valuable export and import trade in the Mediterranean. If the worst came to the worst, Egypt's water supply could be checked from the Sudan. The necessity for these extreme measures is very unlikely; but it is as well to mention them, for faint hearts may conjure up visions of the Egyptian Camel Corps and infantry holding up our oil ships and the modern East Indians on their passage to and from the Mediterranean.

The threat both from Egypt and the Wahibi can be ruled out.

Any other danger to the Canal must come from the sea from East or West. From the East, Japan would certainly not be able to threaten the Canal, for she has no naval bases and it would be no part of her strategy to cut it. We might be embroiled in war in the Mediterranean with European Powers, but it would be a mad strategy that detached forces to threaten the Canal. The fate of the Suez Canal in these circumstances would be fought out in the Western Mediterranean between Malta and Gibraltar. Northern Egypt provides a very necessary Imperial air link, and as aviation develops will become of increasing importance, strategically and commercially; but this is nothing to do with the Canal.

The fact is that, considered objectively, every British infantryman could be removed from the Canal zone, as we are presently going to remove all our troops from Egypt proper, and the defence of that vital waterway would then rest, as indeed it does now, on the Royal Navy.

It may be said that the Canal could be blocked in war-time, or blown up by well-placed dynamite ships manned by desperate patriots in the service of some hypothetical enemy of the British Empire. This was a nightmare for some people in the last war. But we could station a battalion of troops every mile along the Canal and that danger would still exist. Now, as then, it can be met by naval means.

If the above facts are grasped, the problem of the Suez Canal is seen in its true perspective. I have argued along the lines of armed force being the only security for vital strategical points; but it is as well not to overlook the fact that the Suez Canal is of great importance to every commercial and trading people, and its interruption of considerable importance to all of them.

IN BAVARIA TO-DAY

[FROM A CORRESPONDENT IN MUNICH]

"THE carriage rolls on, as before. It is only painted a different colour." Thus a man in the street summed up to me recently the present situation in Bavaria. There is much truth in the saying, but, like most such sayings, it contains only a half-truth. Outwardly, to the casual observer, save for the absence of the Court, more marked here than perhaps anywhere else in Europe where revolution followed the war, things move on much as before. But beneath the surface, as one's knowledge of conditions deepens, one realizes how great is the change that has taken place.

Though they had many links to join them together within the same empire, Bavaria and Prussia represented the extremes of German thought and tradition. Bavaria, predominantly Catholic, is one of the oldest States in Europe, its traditions long maintained without a break, traditions indissolubly connected with the Wittelsbach dynasty. For centuries, while neighbouring States were in turmoil, it remained the home of art and literature and music. During the last hundred years, under the fostering influence of its rulers Munich grew into one of the finest cities of Europe, its well-planned streets and public buildings, its churches, museums, and art galleries, with their wealth of contents, winning it deservedly world-wide fame. The royal castles scattered with lavish hand all over Bavaria are unequalled for magnificence, both for their conception and for the treasures they contain. It was all on a scale of grandeur, of completeness, of efficiency that leave one amazed. The Deutsches Museum, begun only a few years before the war, is one of the most modern and perfect scientific museums in the world, its elaboration and attention to detail typifying all that is best in German thoroughness.

Bavaria had little to gain from the war and much to lose. The close of the four long years of hostilities found it drained of its resources, and the end was revolution. It was from Kiel and Munich that the revolution which was so quickly to spread all over Germany was organized. Breaking out a few days before the Armistice, it hastened that event as it was intended to do. Secretly planned by foreigners, mostly Russian Jews, it came in Munich with a suddenness that carried all before it. It had been well organized. The army, headed by the Crown Prince and containing virtually all the fighting men of the country, was at the front. There were no men left at home save veterans, the wounded, and boys under military age. These last, it was inevitable, largely fell a prey to the insidious propaganda of the revolutionaries. The country was exhausted. There was no one to oppose them. They simply walked in and took possession.

So cleverly and secretly had plans been laid, and so unexpected was the event that the King was out for a walk with his daughter and found on his return to the Residenz that he could not get in. The revolution had virtually been effected during his brief absence. The revolutionaries had suddenly appeared at the Residenz, and there being no one save a few Court officials and a small guard to oppose them they had quickly taken possession. The deservedly popular King and Queen with their family were hurriedly forced to leave Munich, a Russian Jew assumed the leadership of the new Government that was immediately formed, and with a few small disturbances the revolution was an accomplished fact.

It was a striking instance of how easily in these days a revolution can be accomplished. Under modern systems of government the carriage moves

on, to use my friend in the street's metaphor, because the underlying power that keeps it in motion resides in the great body of permanent officials, who steadily carry on, though the heads of the Government may change. In Bavaria the King and his Ministers were swept away, but the Civil Service carried on, not because it approved of the change, but simply in order to keep the wheels of government going, and so prevent a greater disaster.

The present situation in Bavaria is curious. The German Constitution admits of only one President of the Republic, therefore there is no President of the Bavarian State. No one has taken the King's place. There is only a Minister President, who is appointed by and falls with each successive Government. Meanwhile the Crown Prince Rupprecht, who since the death of his father, the late King, in 1921, has been the head of the house of Wittelsbach, lives quietly in his palace overlooking the great central square of Munich and facing the Residenz where his ancestors so long held sway. Though deprived of all the magnificent castles and estates that were regarded as State property, he still holds all the personal possessions of the family. Universally popular and respected, even among those who cannot be counted among his supporters, he is still in touch with almost every phase of Bavarian life. Robbed of necessity of most of its splendour, he still holds Court in his beautiful palace in the very centre of the capital. The old aristocracy, though greatly impoverished, still holds together, pursuing as far as changed conditions will allow the accustomed tenor of its sway. The old regime is holding its own in a manner it has been unable to do in any other country that has suffered revolution since the war.

As to the mass of the people, probably as many as two-thirds are monarchists at heart. No royal family in Europe in pre-war days was more accessible or more closely in touch with the people than the Bavarian royal family. They identified themselves with every interest throughout the country, and in curious contrast to the rigidity of Court etiquette on State occasions they moved among their subjects with the greatest freedom. This largely accounted for their popularity, which still exists to-day, especially in the countryside. Even in these republican days they still continue their activities. The Crown Prince, so far as his difficult position allows, moves freely everywhere. The Crown Princess is among other things President of the Soup Kitchens' Committee for the district in which she lives, and takes an active part in its organization. Another Princess, when asked how she liked the change from the old conditions to the new, spoke first of her charitable work, rejoicing in the greater freedom she now enjoyed in running it, regretting only that she had less money to devote to it. As for Prince Albrecht, the eldest son of the Crown Prince, a fine sportsman and crack shot, one has only to mention his name in the country districts to see faces light up with pride and appreciation. There was surely never a royal family—one cannot write "in exile" since they are all still living in the very centre of Bavarian activities, but a royal family dispossessed—which has so firmly retained its popularity in the country it once ruled. It is small wonder that Bavaria has been humorously designated the Royal Bavarian Republic.

The younger generation in Bavaria is inspired by two chief interests, an astonishing devotion to sport of all kinds and a keen desire for personal advancement. Sport and study seem to go hand in hand. Amusements of a lighter kind take a secondary place. There are no queues outside cinemas in Bavaria. Dancing is not a passion except during carnivals. In the famous beer halls the younger generation is but poorly represented, compared with the older generation. Yet in spite of the undoubtedly healthy

and happy blending of study and sport one misses something of that spirit which was perhaps carried to excess before the war, that spirit of loyalty to and enthusiasm for the Fatherland, of *esprit de corps* and team work as opposed to merely personal interests. The younger generation here, as mostly elsewhere to-day, is out in the modern spirit to have a good time according to its own ideas as to what a good time represents. That German youth turns to the more serious rather than to the more frivolous aspects of life is all to the good.

Outwardly Bavaria makes a brave show, and preserves its air of prosperity. There are no beggars in the streets of Munich, no loafers on the pavements. Almost without exception all are well-dressed. No evidence of penury is thrust upon one's notice as is the case every day in most European capitals. But behind the scenes is much poverty and tragedy. Fifty thousand out of more than seven hundred thousand population of Munich are unemployed. Yet in spite of this poverty the German Government is spending enormous sums on social services, between six and seven billiard marks a year compared with just over one billiard before the war.

Now instead of Bavaria contributing its quota to imperial funds, as in the old days, the new German Republic takes directly virtually every source of revenue, doling out such allowances as it thinks fit to the various States. The practical independence the States enjoyed in the old days has gone. The Minister President of a moment can speak to Berlin with nothing of the influence and insistence of King to Kaiser. Bavaria is to-day a subject State as she has never been before. Meanwhile, in spite of the urgent need for economy, expenditure increases and it is a case of taxing the tax payer out of existence. The breaking-point must come, and unless something occurs to check or alter the course of events one who knows Bavaria well has given it as his belief that that time cannot be long delayed.

TOURS THROUGH LITERARY ENGLAND

II—SHEILA KAYE-SMITH'S SUSSEX*

WHEN white roads usher the motorist into Sussex, they deliver him up to a county whose green orchards and grey towns have two meanings. One is "Sussex" and the other is "Sheila Kaye-Smith." It is impossible to escape either implication if 'Sussex Gorse,' 'Green Apple Harvest,' 'Joanna Godden,' 'Three Against the World,' 'Little England' and 'The George and The Crown' are familiar books. Of these, 'Sussex Gorse' is probably the most familiar—certainly it is bound up with Sussex as closely as with its own binding, and from the motorist's point of view it is almost a guide book to the county. Though it describes the Sussex of 1835, it also tells of Sussex eighty years later, and ordnance maps and signposts alike will to-day point the way to every scene written of in the book.

Patience, the motorist must possess in this tour—patience with himself, that is—for he will often be in two minds, asking himself at Bodiam, where the lovely castle dreams in a moat so thickly covered with water-lily leaves that the water-fowl "walk upon the water," whether he will not forsake the paths of 'Sussex Gorse' and take, instead, a boat and scull himself up the River Rother all the way to Rye,

* The next 'Literary Tour,' which will appear in the issue of May 17, will be through Rupert Brooke's Country.

pondering upon the none-so-recent smuggling activities that this waterway is well adapted to encourage. Again, when he reaches the sea-board between Hastings and Rye, he may be sorely tempted to stay by the green coast and drink his fill of the breezes from the blue English Channel. But Sheila Kaye-Smith's devotion must be made of sterner stuff, and the serious enthusiast will put haphazard wanderings out of his mind and find a better alternative in following the 'Sussex Gorse' itinerary. Let it be said here that of all the delights of this motor-voyage, the greatest is to be found at Bodiam. If proof of this is needed, let the camera judge. When all its pictures are printed there will be none to compare with that of Bodiam Castle, though all the others may well be worth a place in an album. Admittedly, 'Sussex Gorse' is not greatly concerned with this "spot beloved oven all," but fortunately, the surrounding few miles are so essentially the scene of the story that Bodiam need not be omitted from the tour.

A copy of the book should, obviously, accompany the motorist, but in case the tale has to depend upon memory for its associations with the country, it simplifies matters to recall here the scene with which each place on the tour is connected.

The Moor, just north of Bodiam, was the locality of the annual fair, attended by succeeding generations of Backfields. The surrounding acres of land were Reuben Backfield's heart's desire; their cultivation and acquisition accounted for the tragedy of the 'Sussex Gorse' story, constituting Reuben's ambition and his wife's and children's desertion and (in so many cases) death.

Viewing the prospect to-day, it would be hard to credit an overwhelming desire in the heart of any man to acquire these few miles of land, but a backward-cast thought of the conviction the author threw into her story will successfully dispel any cold-blooded doubts. Reuben's overwhelming ambition was to subdue the Moor: so be it; he suffered enough to achieve his purpose, in all conscience, from the time he joined the rioters at the fair and was driven, half-conscious, via Pleyden to Rye to account to the magistrates for his conduct, until the day, some sixty years later, when his fame as conqueror of the Moor spread from Northiam to the coast and became the topic of discussion in every public-house from Hawkhurst to Hastings, from Appledore to Frant. In Peasmash churchyard he watched Parson Barnby, Curate-in-Charge of that village, Beckley and Iden, bury his father, wife, mother and two children, while the church tower "squab like a toadstool, looked at itself in the little spread of water at the foot of the graveyard." In his dreams this farmer, obsessed with his ambition, saw "wind-rippled waves of wheat rolling up to Boarzell's very crest, he saw the threshed corn filling his barn, or rumbling to Iden Mill." So that his dreams might come true, he forbade one of his sons to dawdle round the "muddy Rother banks at Rye where the great ships stood in the water," fascinating the boy who was eventually to shake the mud of his father's farmyard from his feet and apprentice himself

to the sea instead of slaving for his father to reclaim the Moor; upon the Rother Marshes, where Reuben himself had courted Naomi, his daughter Caroline was later to meet the sailor from Rye with whom she chose to run off rather than sacrifice herself any longer to her father's notions of how she could serve the Moor by working in the farmhouse to save him employing outside labour.

In Rye, Reuben started a milk-shop and organized a milk-round to dispose of his dairy produce; he spoke in the Rye Town Hall at political meetings; he despatched his vegetables to Rye for sale—in short, he made Rye his London, though he very seldom trusted his children to visit that town of temptations lest they should be lured away from their work as farm-labourers on the Moor. In spite of all his precautions, Rye accounted for many of his children deserting him. This was always more of a blow to his pride than his fatherhood, more of a rip to his purse (since it necessitated paid labour being engaged) than a wound to his affection.

It sets a peculiar value upon Sussex even in the motorist's opinion, to reflect that this man's love of his country was responsible for six of his children's hatred of it. If overbearing enthusiasm can have such dire results, it were most surely better to travel

this Sussex country with an impartial mind. Yet this would be difficult, for Sussex rouses more than neutrality in the wayfarer's thoughts. Its orchards and blossom, its hop-fields and rough gorse-patched spaces, make an appeal to the eye and the mind that cannot be discounted.

The Rother valley alone furnishes imagination with material upon which to work, while to travel with Sheila Kaye-Smith memories makes it impossible to ignore the significance of the countryside. If 'Sussex Gorse' is not the book uppermost in the mind, Winchelsea, Rye, Walland Marsh, Lydd, Romney, Denge Marsh and Appledore will recall 'Joanna Godden,' Woods Corner, Three Cups Corner, Punnet's Town, Cade Street and Cross-in-Hand will renew memories of 'Little England,' while the country between Lewes and Newhaven belongs to 'The George and The Crown.' 'Three Against the World' is written round East Grinstead, Ashdown Forest and Dorman's Land, and 'Green Apple Harvest' takes in the Rother Valley. Whichever one of these routes is taken, none will prove to be of the "pastoral idyll" type of tour. The country is too wild, the fields too rough, the trees too wind-shaken, the houses too bleak, the people too industrious and busy to give an impression of restfulness. Even on sun-warmed Sabbaths when the ploughshares lean idly against the hedge, no sense of leisure broods over the countryside. The very cattle in the fields appear alert and restless and seem unaware of the habit, practised in sleepier counties, of "contented chewing." Still, if all this were not so, Sussex and Miss Kaye-Smith would not be true to each other. The essence of her books is essentially the essence of her county; if Sussex took on other characteristics, the motorist would fail to recognize the soil that begot 'Sussex Gorse,' when he crossed the county boundaries. M. E. P.-G.



SKETCH MAP showing route through the Sheila Kaye-Smith country. Dotted lines show main roads for abbreviation of the tour if necessary.

THE MAY FLY

BY JAMES DICKIE

IT is said that chasing the fox costs a guinea a minute: dry fly fishing is not quite so expensive but it has one peculiarity not shared by hunting: the more skilful the fisherman the less will he fish—that is to say, the smaller will be the proportion of time when his fly is on the water. In these days, when it is not unusual for £100 to be paid for a "rod" and when fishing is often limited to week ends, it would be interesting to work out just how much fishing *does* cost per minute.

Visualize a first-class dry fly man on a chalk stream early in the season: as he moves very slowly upstream a rise ahead stops him: he creeps forward and, kneeling on a tussock, watches the spot. A fly comes over and disappears, but our friend is cunning: the movement of the water has shown him that a small grayling is responsible. He fixes a little net to the end of his rod and, as a fly floats by, he fishes it out. It has two tails and is a greenish grey colour; still he is not content, he sees a smaller fly and secures a specimen; this time it is a dark iron blue.

Twenty yards upstream there is a swirl, but the water is not broken: a novice would probably have failed to notice anything, but our friend realizes that a trout has taken a nymph—one of the Dark Olives or Iron Blues which, after a year under the water, was on its way to the surface to split its skin and emerge as a fly. The fisherman crawls forward; now the trout, a greyish brown shadow, is visible against the pale bottom of the stream. He is poised close to the surface in front of a weed bed; every few moments he makes a rapid movement to one side or the other. The fisherman is not a "purist," that is to say, he does not offer artificial floating flies to trout which are refusing real ones.

He takes from his box a wingless "fly" with a greenish silk body and legs which are black at the base and red at the tip—a hackle Greenwell's Glory.

He ties it on, wets it in his mouth and casts well to one side of and behind the trout. The fly sinks like a stone: distance gauged he drops it a foot beyond the trout and slightly to one side: the dark shadow moves towards where it must be and turns to go back—the rod twitches and the trout, well hooked, races madly upstream, the fisherman follows as line is torn off his reel: useless at the moment to try to hold the fish: the tiny hook would pull out even if the gut should stand the strain, which it certainly would not.

None the less, the man has some control; as the trout makes for a reed bed the rod-point comes down and the full strain is exerted sideways: the fish is turned slightly from his course, he misses the end of the weed bed by a foot. Now he changes his mind and races downstream, the man furiously winding in; for a moment the line is slack but the hook is well home, the trout is still there: as he feels the strain he jumps: the rod-point dips slightly and again comes the even, inexorable strain. The trout is tiring: the man crouches low, unslings his net and puts it in the water.

Side-strain edges the trout closer: at the last minute he sees the net and races off again, but the strain is telling, the man edges downstream and reels in, as the fish comes over the net he lifts it. Now the flies may hatch in peace in front of that weed patch—but not for long: so good a feeding spot will soon be appropriated. The fisherman moves gently on upstream: time after time he pauses to watch a spot where he has seen a rise, but he never makes a cast.

Under the other bank is a mass of dead weeds and rubbish: a fly disappears and there is a faint noise like a stick withdrawn from mud. Now the

fisherman does a surprising thing: he takes off the fly on which he has just caught a trout! But there is method in his madness: this one is eating hatched flies.

He ties on a little winged fly with a body of mole's fur (he knows that most trout prefer the Iron Blue to the Olive) and sends it across: as it floats over the trout, the stream, faster in the middle than close to the weeds, catches his line: the fly drags. He lifts it and makes false casts to dry it, but the trout is frightened—perhaps in half an hour he may feed again. The fisherman moves upstream. At last, in full view, a feeding trout: two casts, the third brings the fly over his nose, he rises, the fisherman strikes and the trout races downstream towards him into a weed-patch, through it, upstream again, through another weedpatch, then he jumps. There is too much friction on the line, the fine gut breaks and the fish is free.

COVENT GARDEN AGAIN

[FROM A CORRESPONDENT]

ONCE more Covent Garden is restored to Opera, and the season opens with 'Die Meistersinger,' followed by two cycles of 'The Ring,' ever welcome to lovers of an epic tale well told. Once more, when Wagner is so generously represented, we are not allowed to catch a glimpse of his great forerunner Weber. But it is impossible to reach a full understanding of Wagner without an intimacy with the operatic work of Weber, especially 'Der Freischütz.' From his early childhood Wagner was steeped in this most national of German operas. "Do you not think he might have a gift for music?" were among the last words of Ludwig Geyer, hearing his little stepson play the 'Jungfernkrantz' in the next room. In a short while Wagner knew all the airs and "played the overture with atrocious fingering." He himself declares, "When Weber passed our house on the way to the theatre, I used to watch him with something akin to religious awe." No wonder that in 'Der Freischütz' we see many germs of Wagner's work. 'Forest Murmurs' come to mind in the early music of the 'Wolf's Glen'; we meet the pure Agathe again in 'Elsa and Elizabeth.' Even the Wild Hunt flashing across the back cloth probably suggested the possibility of staging a Valkyrie ride. At the appearance of the Hermit, with his commanding presence, his long steady notes soaring above a Wagnerian passage of orchestration and the impression that here is something more than mortal, we can shut our eyes and feel before us Wotan the Wanderer; we expect the Hermit at any moment to rise to his feet and proclaim, "Above the earth dwell the Eternal Gods," as Wotan sings in answer to Mime's riddle, and it is a shock to us to realize that we are in the presence of a Christian hermit and not Valhalla's king.

The very overture of 'Freischütz,' welcome for its own sake with its horn opening, expressive of all that is best in romantic Germany, makes possible the overture to 'Meistersinger.' Here is no longer, as in Beethoven's 'Fidelio,' or the operas of Mozart, an interesting piece of symphonic music, with at most a reference or two to dramatic moments in the coming opera, the trumpet call that saves the hero in Leonora No. 3, or the grim chords of Don Giovanni's statue guest. Here is not only the creation of 'Der Freischütz's' magic atmosphere, but the epitome of all that is to come, the forest horns, the music of the Wolf's glen, Caspar's *motif*, the appearance of Zamiel, and Agathe's triumph-tune when, under the Hermit's influence, all ends well. This is a pioneer overture and Wagner follows it in producing 'Die Meistersinger.'

THE THEATRE

PORTRAIT OF A " HUSSY "

BY GILBERT WAKEFIELD

Debonair. By G. B. Stern and Frank Vosper. Lyric Theatre.

IT is astonishing how often we see angels rushing in where fools would fear to tread. Mr. Vosper, for example, is no fool; theatrically speaking, he is, at least, a minor angel. Yet he has not only persuaded himself that a play could be fashioned out of such unpromising material as Miss G. B. Stern's chaotic novel 'Debonair,' but has actually made the mistake of dramatizing it, instead of using the essentials of its story as the raw material of a new comedy. Now, it is perfectly true that occasionally, though very rarely, one reads a novel that "simply asks" to be made into a play; but apart altogether from the fact that playwrights should always regard these invitations with extreme suspicion, this particular novel does nothing of the kind.

'Debonair' is the story of a young girl who, left alone in London while her mother is on the Riviera, gets herself involved in a series of astonishing adventures and flies away from each of them so soon as she finds it either dangerous or unpleasant. These adventures are amusing in themselves; but the point of the story of Loveday Trevelyan is the fact that her impulsive temperament and her inadequate allowance (for though she receives each month enough to live on in a quiet, young-ladylike style, she happens to be neither quiet nor young-ladylike, but feckless and out for as good a time as she can get) whirl her into situation after situation. The result is a chaotic story, which Miss Stern in her novel relates in an appropriately chaotic manner.

Unfortunately, though chaos in a novel is often effective, in a play it is always dangerous, and almost always fatal. Moreover, this particular example of chaotic adventure involves another theatrical difficulty in its constant change of scenery. Mr. Vosper gives us seven scenes, which are too many for a satisfactory play; but they are also too few for a satisfactory account of Loveday's adventures. He has attempted to get round this problem by enacting before us only some of the episodes and narrating the others through the mouth of his heroine. Thus we are continually hearing about things instead of actually witnessing them; and the fact that this indirect method is required is evidence that 'Debonair' is the wrong sort of novel for dramatic treatment. Moreover, each of the seven scenes is necessarily short; and each is still further shortened, so far as its real contents are concerned, by having to include a narrative résumé of some episode omitted from the action of the play, or even (which is far worse) of some episode we have already witnessed in a previous scene, the narrative in this case being solely for the benefit of some other person in the play. Thus, those incidents which are enacted before us have to be so summarily treated as to give us an inadequate, and possibly misleading, picture of the heroine.

Not that this excuses, or even explains, the hatred, disapproval and contempt with which the sterner and more unbending of the critics frown upon poor Loveday. When Mr. Agate, for example (who calls her a "fool" and a "hussy," and suggests that a smacking or "a working-class husband and six children" would improve her character), refuses to believe that Loveday is "a fair sample of present-day young womanhood," what we hear is not the voice of misunderstanding, but the thunder of the moralist who deliberately distorts the evidence to fit his sermon.

For, as Mr. Agate knows perfectly well, nobody ever suggested that she is "a fair sample of present-day young womanhood." Why, good heavens, the whole secret of these "hussies" is that they are rare and untypical, smack-worthy and (by all moral standards) fools! Their ideas are unorthodox, their morality—well, unconventional, and their attitude towards the male sex so unscrupulous as to terrify us with a fear lest all modern young women are as alive to our weaknesses and as ready to take advantage of them! And yet, whatever we may say against them, the fact remains that men who are otherwise quite sane and cautious make fools of themselves—sometimes consciously, sometimes unconsciously—because they find these wayward, impetuous, selfish and yet generous young personalities irresistible!

If 'Debonair' is successful as a play (and I think it will be), it will owe that success to the fact that, whatever its shortcomings as a play, it contains one brilliant piece of portraiture. Loveday—thanks very largely to whoever chose Miss Celia Johnson for the part—is as real and fascinating a heroine as one could ask for. I hesitate to speak of Miss Johnson's talent as an actress, since it is impossible to judge by a single performance. But it is quite obvious that she has one of the most important qualities that go to make a star—vitality. And, I fancy, she has another, which is personality. Of course, the part of Loveday is a gift from the gods. It is not a particularly difficult part; it is a part in which an actress, if she does not utterly fail, cannot help achieving a personal "triumph." But I suspect that, unlike many actresses who have been carried to a momentary success by a spectacular, fool-proof rôle, Miss Johnson has arrived to stay. As a piece of acting, I should place Miss Dorice Fordred's playing of a Budapest courtesan much higher than Miss Johnson's Loveday, simply because I have no doubt whatever that the rôle is a very difficult one for an English actress, and even less doubt that she played it flawlessly. And Miss Kate Cutler was extremely clever in a part that was too subtle for the theatre. The others had merely to "be themselves," a task which none of them had any difficulty in accomplishing—except that perhaps Mr. Vosper had miscast himself as the very rich young barrister.

And this reminds me that last week I wrote more words than my editor allows me space for, so that certain tributes to the cast of 'Down Our Street' had to be cut out. But this most amusing comedy by Mr. Ernest George is too well acted for such omissions to be pardonable, and so I hasten to do now what only a miscalculation prevented me from doing at the proper time. For instance, in addition to very fine performances by Miss Nancie Price and Mr. Morris Harvey (these I did mention), there was Mr. Stanley Vilven's excellent study of an Italian café-keeper; Miss Violet Howard's flashing Tessie Bernstein, and Mr. Ronald Shiner's twenty-seconds' sketch of a tram-driver in a hurry. These were all performances which helped to give the café scene a wonderfully realistic atmosphere. Then there was Mr. Ivan Brandt, who played the unheroic hero on exactly the right note throughout, and Miss Maisie Darrell, an exceptionally clever young actress—and a very attractive one—who gave, as she always gives, a remarkably good performance as the heroine, Belle Collins. Finally, there was Mr. Milton Rosmer, whose portrait of the boozie's tout was good, and whose production of the play (a particularly difficult one, I imagine, to produce) was even better.

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THE FILMS

SONG AND DANCE

BY MARK FORREST

Puttin' on the Ritz. Directed by E. H. Sloman. New Gallery.

Free and Easy. Directed by E. Sedgwick. The Empire.

If all horses ran as true to form as American musical film comedies, bookmakers would be seen more in Wandsworth and less at Cannes. In the latest production, the bumptious young American, with which type British filmgoers are now passably familiar, rises from being a third-class variety artist to seeing his name in lights on Broadway. With him rises the nice little girl. But whereas "he puts on the Ritz," which, besides being one of the theme songs, means roughly that he apes society, the nice little girl does not forget her old friends. Society, not content with turning the young man's head, also fills his flask with bad whisky, and in the end blinded actually, but metaphorically seeing the error of his ways, he returns once more to the nice little girl and his former variety playmates.

A crude story and there are the usual scenes "of more than oriental splendour" to which is added the customary debauch as practised by sprigs of the New York *haut monde*. So far so bad, but again running true to form, the film lifts itself out of the ruck with three really tuneful numbers, composed by Irving Berlin, and with a small ballet entitled 'Alice in Wonderland.' The ballet is produced in colour and is excellently carried out. Mixed in with the sentiment are the customary "wise cracks," mostly fired off by James Gleason and Lilyan Tashman in their rôles of the variety couple who don't see their names on Broadway. Joan Bennett reveals an unexpectedly deep voice when she is allowed to sing, which is very seldom, and she acts with a certain charm as the nice little girl; but the musical comedy is written around the character of the bumptious young man, played by Harry Richman. He has a good voice and manages the humorous side of the part well, but in the serious moments he was not quite so much at home.

Buster Keaton, for a long time one of the favourite comedians of a large group of people, makes his first appearance in a talking film at the Empire. There is nothing much wrong with his voice, which is quite ordinary without being particularly funny, but there is something wrong with his material. As the manager of the winner of a beauty prize competition, he arrives in Hollywood with the girl and her mother; there he succeeds in making a star out of himself instead of out of her. There are plenty of laughs in the first part of the film, but when Buster Keaton is projected into musical comedy he does not appear to be nearly so funny to me as he seems to be to his director, played with spirit by David Burton. With his face made up to represent a clown and his old lounge suit exchanged for various other glittering garments, he does not represent himself, which is a mistake. His artistry lies in his still expressionless countenance, and once that is tampered with there is a distinct lull in the fun. A great many actors can portray a knock-about comedian, and Buster Keaton as such is no better and no worse than the majority, but the very ordinary plot of 'Free and Easy' robs the audience for a great part of the film of what he alone can do, namely, portray the supreme unconsciousness of his own idiocy. It is, therefore, a disappointing picture and I hope when Hollywood and, I suppose, the world have recovered from the shock of hearing Buster Keaton talk and sing that material nearer akin to his former successes will be forthcoming.

LITERARY COMPETITIONS—218

SET BY SIR CHARLES PETRIE

A. It is one of the tragedies of history that the "Popular Press," as we know it to-day, is of such recent date that we are unable to discover what attitude was adopted by the man-in-the-street, whose views, of course, it always reflects, towards the great crises of the past. For the purpose of this competition, however, it is assumed to have been in existence in 1745, and the SATURDAY REVIEW offers a First Prize of One Guinea and a Second Prize of Half a Guinea for a leading article of not more than 250 words such as would have appeared on the morning after it became known in London that the victorious Jacobite army had reached Derby.

B. It is announced that a Society for the Abolition of Superfluous Courtesy in business has been established in Berlin, and to assist the branch which will doubtless soon be formed in London, the SATURDAY REVIEW offers a First Prize of One Guinea and a Second Prize of Half a Guinea for a few hints to a young business man, written in blank verse, in the style of the advice of Polonius to Laertes.

RULES

- i. All envelopes must be marked LITERARY, followed by the number of the Problem, in the top left-hand corner, and addressed to the Editor, The SATURDAY REVIEW, 9 King Street, London, W.C.2 (e.g., this week: LITERARY 218A or LITERARY 218B).
- ii. Typescript is not essential, provided the writing is legible, but competitors must use one side of the paper only. Pen-names may be employed if desired.
- iii. Where a word limit is set, every fifty words must be marked off by competitors on the MSS.
- iv. The Editor's decision is final. He reserves to himself the right to print in part or in whole any matter sent in for competition, whether successful or not. MSS. cannot be returned. Competitors failing to comply with any of the rules will be disqualified. Should the entries submitted be adjudged undeserving of award the Editor reserves the right to withhold a prize or prizes.

Entries must reach the Editor, addressed according to the rules, not later than by the first post on Monday, May 12. The results will be announced in the issue of May 17.

RESULTS OF COMPETITIONS 216

SET BY OLIVER WARNER

A. Dr. Johnson, having been induced to go to his first talkie, has a few words to say about it afterwards to his friends. We offer a First Prize of One Guinea and a Second Prize of Half a Guinea for a paragraph of not more than 250 words in the manner of 'Boswell's Life' on this matter.

B. We offer a First Prize of One Guinea and a Second Prize of Half a Guinea for a generalisation in the style and manner of Pope's 'Essay on Criticism' on Twentieth-Century Criticism. This may be appreciative or the reverse, but not more than 25 lines in length.

REPORT FROM MR. WARNER

216A. Nearly all the entries in this competition contained at least one good Johnsonian remark. Nearly all contained the opinion that the Doctor would be averse to the talkies. Many made him virulent, some absurdly so.

I think the most natural entry is that of Athos, to whom goes first prize. His entry loses little by its moderation, and contains at least one pearl. Feu Follet, to whom second prize is awarded, also sends an entry which reads naturally; it is also one of the few in which Johnson appears tolerant. There is, of course, no means of gauging what he would have thought of the talkies. They might have amused him.

Will Feu Follet send his or her address?

FIRST PRIZE

One evening, when Dr. Goldsmith and I had called upon Johnson, the latter being indisposed, we spoke of publick amusements. *Goldsmith*: "I think, as the Cinema now enables many more persons to see dramatick representations than when these were limited to the theatres, that the publick taste must be improved." *Johnson*: "Why, Sir, it might be said, with equal propriety, that because many more persons now travel by the railway than formerly by the stage-coaches, the publick knowledge of Agriculture, or Astronomy, must be enlarged." He told us that he had been taken to one of the contrivances called *talkies*, and observed, "I find the most agreeable thing, at the Cinema, is a commodious seat, in which I can close my eyes and sleep or meditate without disturbance. But, at the *talkie*, some tiresome people seem to be crying to you from a distance through speaking trumpets, and you are obliged to open your eyes." *Boswell*: But, Sir, what was the piece? Were you not diverted?" *Johnson*: "Nay, Sir, I have forgot the name, but 'tis no matter; I found it mighty tedious. The actors were gentlemanlike fellows enough, but they had the voices of porters; the women were half naked trulls, who spoke through their noses. I know not when I have spent a more unprofitable evening." *Goldsmith*: "But the thing is sure a wonderful invention." *Johnson*: "Sir, the bagpipe is doubtless a wonderful invention, but I would not pay a sixpence to hear it."

ATHOS

SECOND PRIZE

Dr. Johnson sat directly behind me; he said very little, and during the interval he was wrapped up in a grave abstraction and seemed quite a cloud, amidst all the glitter and gaiety. That evening, I dined with him at Sir Joshua Reynolds's, where there was a large company and a great deal of conversation. I introduced the subject of talking films and mentioned that we had that afternoon witnessed an exhibition of 'The Taming of the Shrew.' Mr. Wilkes remarked that the producer had made the most of the bold flights of Shakespeare's imagination. *Johnson*: "Amidst all the brilliancy of the production and exuberance of wit, there was a strange want of *taste*, but the piece will succeed from its novelty and general spirit and liveliness; it dismissed the audience in a good humour." *Boswell*: "You must admit, Sir, that this observation shows the truth of your statement that the great end of comedy is—making an audience merry." *Johnson*: "Wit is wit by whatever means it is produced; and, if good, will appear so at all times." *Sir Joshua*: "The real character of a man is found out by his amusements."—Johnson agreed with him. *Boswell*: "Surely, Sir, some of the performances were commendable?" *Johnson*: "The Shrew was a better romp than any I ever saw in nature. Petruchio trusted too much to theatrical ingenuity and extraordinary vitality, but for obstreperous, broad-faced mirth, I know not his equal." Being questioned further, he said, "It was excellent fooling."

FEU FOLLET

216B. Pope is a difficult poet to imitate, not so much in the technicalities of his verse as in manner. The entries in this competition were not, as a whole, very good, with one exception, to which first prize is awarded. Though grossly untrue as a generalization, W. G.'s entry is really amusing. At least, I found it so.

Walter Harrison wins second prize. Had T. E. Casson's entry been a little more to the point it would have been very good indeed. Of the less fortunate entries it was the best.

FIRST PRIZE

In Caledonia's glens, each unbreech'd chief,
Whene'er he stole the patient Saxon's beef,
A minstrel hired, the daring deed to hymn,
Lest time and circumstance his fame should dim.
Let Caledonia's sons from Grub Street learn
How bright the fires of flattery can burn.
Each publisher, whose books the world amaze,
Not one but twenty humble scribblers pays.
Sleek, oily-smooth Verbose now I sing,
Of this inglorious hierarchy the king.
His right hand holds a book, his left a list
Of cliches phrased to suit each novelist.
As "bold," "idyllic," "better than his last,"
Or "steep'd in old tradition," or "well-cast,"
Or "daring," "subtly-drawn," or what you will,—
Aught that will tend his master's purse to fill.
Selected phrases duly joined, his stuff
Goes in with others, and becomes a puff—
The "Bookworm," or the "Bookish Man's Review,"
Or any name that cheats such fools as you.
And so the market's rigged, the logs are rolled,
And Grub Street scribes, like books, are bought and sold.

W. G.

SECOND PRIZE

Some critics write that those who run may read
Their prose, but not the verse that fills their need.
Like curs they prey on refuse, spurn the good,
And bite the hand whose richness finds them food.
Many are spoil'd by that fantastic throng
Who scorn what's good, to glorify what's wrong:
The latest Maevius scribbles in despite
Of Maro's rules: Thersites proves him right;
This critic hears no music from the Past,
For him he only sings who sang the last:
That other, blinded by the Classic Stage,
Decries the Drama of the modern Age.
Some on the leaves of other critics prey,
And save their labour for another day:
Others fulfil the tasks they undertake
So swift their hand ne'er knows the blots they make.
These savour not the honey that they taste,
Fast-clogged by wax they gather in their haste:
Those browse on garbage, till, with palate sour,
They taste no sweetness in the sweetest flower;
Fulfilled with venom, and with foulness cloyed,
Their style turns bitter, and their meaning void.

WALTER HARRISON

¶ A number of solutions to competitions are disqualified every week because they reach the Editor too late for adjudication. Competitors are asked to note the closing dates of the competition and to post their solutions in good time.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

1 The Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW welcomes the free expression in these columns of genuine opinion on matters of public interest, though he disclaims responsibility alike for the opinions themselves and the manner of their expression.

2 Letters on topical subjects, intended for publication the same week, should reach him on Tuesday.

"A POLITICAL BUDGET"

SIR,—In your leading article, on page 476 of your issue of April 19, you wonder how much longer the interests of this country are to be sacrificed to the shade of the late lamented Mr. Cobden. Are you not under a misapprehension? For the great man clearly laid it down in his writings that :

If, as has lately been shown in England, at certain periods in the history of a nation, it becomes necessary to review its principles of domestic policy for the purpose of adapting the Government to the changing and improving condition of its people—it must be equally the part of a wise community to alter the maxims by which its foreign relations have, in past times, been regulated in conformity with the changes which have taken place over the entire globe.

It will therefore be observed that Cobden was not so purblind and prejudiced as the so-called Free-Traders of the present day, who claim to be acting on his principles.

I am, etc.,
Littlestone,
H. C. TROLLOPE
New Romney, Kent

PALESTINE

SIR,—May I be allowed to suggest once again that the pledge given by Britain that she was fighting "to make the world safe for Democracy" entirely justifies the Arab attitude and, in strict logic, renders the Balfour Note, which came afterwards, and the Mandate, which came still later, of no effect? In the ordinary affairs of life, if a man makes contradictory promises he is held to be bound by the earliest, unless it can be shown that he had no right to make it.

On the strength of this pledge and of other promises, which convinced them that self-government would be assured to them, the Arabs broke their allegiance to the Sultan and gave their support to the Allies, thus contributing very materially to the defeat of the Turks and the occupation of Palestine. Thus the pledge given to the world in general and the promises, whether explicit or implicit, made to the Arabs in particular, bore excellent fruit and saved for the Allies many lives and much money, and it now seems peculiarly mean for us to declare, in effect, that we are so far committed in honour of the Jewish view of the question that our obligations to those who form the great mass of the Palestinian population must be cancelled.

Talking a few weeks ago with an Arab delegate sent to London to help in laying the Arab case before the British public, he declared that it was only the belief, fostered by British propaganda, that they would enjoy self-government, which induced himself and many others to break their oath of allegiance and come over to the Allies. If he and others had not been bribed into deserting by specious promises they would never have done so, for the Turkish rule was easy, with its light taxation and freedom from bureaucratic interference.

Whether the Arab civilization or the Jewish—as understood and practised by the Zionists—is the better is a question which really does not arise, since, when we promised to "make the world safe for Democracy," we wisely made no conditions about the intelligence and education of the newly enfranchised democrats. The Arabs do not in the least fear a comparison, but anything of the sort would be quite out of place. During

the war nobody stopped to enquire whether the civilization of our heathen Allies, the Japanese, was superior to that of our Christian enemies, the Germans, and comparisons of that sort are equally unwise to-day.

One thing we must avoid doing at all costs, now that Britain no longer rules the sea, thanks to the Naval Conference, while France is beginning to rule the air and the fate of our Indian Empire is trembling in the balance, we must avoid any appearance of treating Arabs as inferiors because they are Asiatics. At the present crisis we cannot afford to flout the opinion of Asia.

I am, etc.,
Scarcroft, near Leeds

C. F. RYDER

MR. HECHT'S ECONOMICS

SIR,—In your issue of April 19 your reviewer remarks that "denial of any virtue to the competitive system is singularly unfair," and he traverses the author's statement that "the man in the street can scarcely quote a single benefit from it." He instances the strap-hanger who, Lord Ashfield had declared, had come to stay, and he tells us that the appearance of traffic "pirates" led to a rapid increase in the provision of seats for tired travellers in tube and bus. But the strap-hanger is still with us, while the rapid increase in seating accommodation might more fairly be attributed to a desire to carry more passengers and thereby augment the profits of Lord Ashfield's undertakings, not to mention the fact that the appearance of traffic "pirates" led to the regulation of traffic and of strap-hangers.

The author is made to say that "every intelligent woman knows prices to be practically the same wherever she deals" and "to deny that pennies in the shilling are saved by shopping in the East End instead of in the prosperous residential quarters of the metropolis," whereas what he does say is that prices are practically the same in the various shops in each quarter.

Again, because the author "acknowledges the urge of self-interest" he is accused of "throwing competition out of an upper window and admitting it again by a back door in the basement," although there is an obvious difference between self-interest or a desire to better one's condition, and the conflict of individual interests or a desire to do so at the expense of others. As your reviewer admits, the author does not pretend that everything can be achieved by selfless co-operation.

A similar lack of logic is manifested in the jibe on the subject of nature. To reject natural laws in connexion with man's economic relationship is not inconsistent with admitting a physiological law that nature determines what we must eat to live and intended us to live on home-grown food.

With regard to the Malthusian bogey, your reviewer admits that the principle of family allowance was widely practised in the past, and he knows that its abolition coincided with a huge increase in population, yet he asserts that increased wages, when paid irrespective of children, coincide with a lower birth-rate. French statistics merely prove that, when birth-control is universally practised, disregard of the needs of children leads to a diminution of population. That a uniform wages system is responsible for a higher birth-rate among the unfit is recognized by every biologist if not by economists.

It is gratifying to read that "the author's analysis of the comparative worth of one trade and another is his chief contribution to economic wisdom," yet the suggestion that a deliberate transfer of labour and capital to more profitable employment implies the mobility of labour and capital is, surely, the acme of perversity. No wonder your reviewer got a headache. No wonder he urges "every student of political economy to read, and read carefully, a work" in which, though "nine in ten projects are inexpedient,

the tenth might any day be discovered to hold a germ of industrial salvation."

Warwick Road,
Bexhill-on-Sea

I am, etc.,
J. S. HECHT

OPERA FOR CHILDREN

SIR,—When I plead for opera for children I am thinking of 'Hansel and Gretel,' the beautiful creation of Humperdinck. And I am also thinking of the "Talkie" cinema. For only by aid of the "Talkie" cinema can sufficient distribution be obtained. If we can have operas of this kind on the "Talkies," all the children everywhere can see and hear them. Of course, if colour can be added, the charm will be greater. Opera seems to need colour. But it is not only children who will benefit by this spread of opera. Personally, I should like to hear Mozart's 'Magic Flute,' Weber's 'Der Freischütz,' and the works of many of the old composers, though their methods would seem thin and obsolete to modern critics.

They have a charm for the lover of old things. And it is possible that some of the grown-up audience who have never heard the old productions would find them quite amusing and attractive. I do not wish to make invidious comparisons, but I must state that I am not drawn to much that is offered by the "Talkies." I regret that I have not had the opportunity to attend 'The Beggar's Opera.'

To come back to the original question. If the production of 'Hansel and Gretel' proved attractive, it might lead to the production of other operas on the cinema specially written for children. I do not know if 'Alice in Wonderland' has ever been arranged as an opera, but if not, I think the immortal work would be a subject worthy of a great composer's powers.

I am, etc.,
EDWARD URWICK

A WORD FOR THE WISE

SIR,—The SATURDAY REVIEW for March 1 has just reached me and I have read with much interest Mr. Gerald Gould's article 'A Word for the Wise.' There is obviously a great deal of truth in what Mr. Gould says about the hostile attitude towards reviewers, consisting as it does in the "constant, vague, general indictment" of which Mr. Gould complains.

But surely he is incorrect in attributing this feeling to spiteful revenge from writers who have been—as they think—unfairly criticized. Is not the feeling engendered by the necessarily superior attitude of the reviewer, which reacts on the reader and the general public by producing a feeling of ignorance and inferiority?

At the present moment I have little opportunity of obtaining or reading books; but I read with much enjoyment all the reviews of every book appearing in the SATURDAY REVIEW and other periodicals. Of the half-dozen books reviewed in any one number, the first may be a monumental work on Chinese porcelain. The second, perhaps, is 'Forty Years in the Hunting Field,' by a sporting country squire. The third is an ethnological attempt to prove the existence of matriarchy in some obscure island in the Pacific, while the fourth, a translation from the original Rumanian, is a highly specialized work by a Professor in Bucharest on the subject of 'Medieval Mysticism in the Balkans.'

Now the ordinary reader (including myself) is crassly ignorant of the organization of a London periodical, and he has a vague idea that the Editor keeps a few brainy people up his sleeve, to review new books as they emerge from the publishers. As the reviews are unsigned, it seems possible that the same reviewer may conceivably review a number of books on widely different subjects.

In the hypothetical list above, the reviewer is very niggardly with his approbation for the expert on Chinese porcelain. He suggests that in addition to photographs of specimens in the British Museum, those in the museums at Prague and Sofia might have been included, and he is amazed to find that the writer omits all mention of the wonderful private collection in the possession of Professor So-and-So. The ordinary reader, whose knowledge of Chinese porcelain is strictly limited, is duly impressed with the erudition of the reviewer.

The hunting book is rather damned by faint praise, and the reader has the temerity to wonder whether the reviewer really knows more about hunting than the country squire. The anthropological book is reviewed in a very technical way, and the reviewer criticizes the evidence adduced, in the light of some recently published German authority.

In the fourth book the author is entirely flattened by the reviewer at the outset. This wide subject, he tells us, has been approached from the narrow standpoint of the Yugo-Slav, and entirely ignores the point of view of the Czech. Moreover, Professor X has failed to realize the influence of Aryan and Semitic contact, while vast literature on the subject has been completely ignored. Such well-known authors as Dr. Branovitch, Professor Kreitz and many other names instantly leap to the mind—all these authorities having been ignored.

At this juncture the ordinary reader of the reviews decides that either the reviewers are in each case an uncompromising mass of erudition, or, on the other hand, that they are very ordinary people with a smattering of a great many subjects, and a flair for looking up abstruse subjects in the reference library.

If the former supposition is correct, what a pity it is that the reviewer himself did not tackle the books on porcelain or Balkan mysticism, and show us how it should be done, or write the ideal book on hunting, and let the country squire have an innings at criticism. In the latter case, are not some of the criticisms written from a rather unnecessarily superior platform?

In his heart of hearts the general reader finds himself fluctuating between these two solutions, feeling a dull resentment at his own inferior knowledge in the first case, and an equal resentment at the superior attitude adopted in the second. The result is the "constant, vague, general indictment," to which Mr. Gould calls attention.

I am, etc.,
Lokoja, Northern Nigeria AUSTIN KENNEDY

[The writer is mistaken. Editors do not keep a few brainy people up their sleeve, nor are reviews all written by the same hand. So far as possible, an effort is always made to ensure that books are reviewed by experts, or, at least, amateurs of the subject with which they deal. If Mr. Kennett, for example, were to write a book on Northern Nigeria, it would not be reviewed by a country squire, a theologian, or even an expert in Chinese porcelain, but by some retired official or returned traveller who had actually been to the West Coast; and, in many cases, as the writer will see, reviews are signed by the critic himself.—ED. S.R.]

LITERARY COMPETITIONS

SIR,—If striking confirmation was wanted of the justice of my recent letter to you it would be afforded by the results of your latest competitions. I have no belief in competitions made "safe for democracy"—Heaven forbid! At the same time, to drop into the style beloved of your competitors, I don't like to see poor democracy suffering from the vacuity of Madame Hubbard's esurient canine. I have suggested a happy medium.

I am, etc.,
111 Packington Street, N. 1 ARCHIBALD GIBBS

IN GENERAL

THE newspaper hurricane which suddenly blew up last week round General Crozier's war book probably represents the release of a good deal of pent-up irritation. Signs of this coming storm, an inevitable sequel to the deep depression which moved eastward from Central Europe with Remarque and Company a year or so back, have not been wanting. The storm might well have burst a few weeks earlier round some other head than the General's. Somehow or other it didn't; there is a lot of luck in such things.

Of the right and wrong in this book I am not going to say anything, for I have not yet seen it, and unlike those numerous officers of high rank, schoolmasters, clerics, policewomen and so on, who aired their opinions several days before the book was available, I shall here hold my peace. But as a patient student of public controversy, I was interested by several subsidiary issues which were hurriedly raised in the hubbub—raised, alas, as only too often, without being fittingly explored—and particularly by several voices which kept protesting that publishers do wrong in publishing such books. This point, it is true, was followed up a little way by one of the most indignant of our morning contemporaries—one whom a look of outraged indignation always becomes exceedingly well. Its special courier was hurriedly sent forth to gather the views of publishers themselves on this question, but these gentlemen showed little inclination to be drawn. One of them (not General Crozier's publisher) was reported as saying: "The wind must blow freely, so to speak, and it is not a publisher's business to suppress any particular side." And these words, true and half-true, shadowy, and even a little cynical—"so to speak"—left me musing about publishers and their business in general.

There must be, in that strange celestial region where books unborn pass their hopeful, Pirandellesque existence, a great 'Anatomy of Publishing' awaiting its due author. It will tell us of the motives, the ideals, the practice, the illusions and disillusionments of the publisher, of his place in the actual world and, *per contra*, in the ideal Republic. It ought to be a good book; I only hope the author will find a publisher for it.

But it will not be easy to write. I do not envy the writer his task of dissecting the motive and feelings that take a man into that complex and chancy activity. Yet a great deal will depend on a good understanding of such individual motives. It is common nowadays to assume that the business of publishing books—the directing and circulation of ideas in society, for in essence it is no less—has in modern times become somehow an impersonal, mass-production, purely commercial process. "The old relation of publisher and author is gone. . . . *et cetera*, runs the generalization. But it is based, I think, on faulty observation. It is quite true that there have grown up large cumbrous firms which seem to manufacture and distribute books with as little individuality of feeling as they might boots. I name no names; but with these large concerns it would clearly be difficult, if not, indeed, impossible, to maintain the traditional standards of personalized interest which have helped to make the vocation at its best a "gentlemanly" one. But I feel, nevertheless, that, even allowing for necessary alterations in working conditions, the individual publisher whose personality, be it even the collective one of a partnership with sometimes a really distinctive "reader," is unmistakably reflected in his "list," remains in an invulnerable position. It is he who still finds almost all the new talent. The mass-producers, for the most part, are either exploiting established figures, or just turning out "reading matter" in slightly varied grades of entertainment-value, for a fairly steady and calculable

market which demands such matter very much as another demands a steady output of varied chocolate assortments, vanilla, peppermint, pistache and nut. It is still the individual publisher who finds and circulates the books that contribute, through work of imagination or analysis, to the general stock of ideas, good or bad, and who is, therefore, for better or worse, a very considerable figure in the intellectual spirit of his times. Again, I name no names. But it will be easy for anyone who follows significant currents in present-day literature and has the desirable habit of observing publishers' imprints, to do this for himself.

The best forerunner of this unborn 'Anatomy' that I know is the collection of essays published a year or so ago by M. Bernard Gresset under the title of 'La Chose Littéraire.' M. Gresset is a man of remarkable parts, who has not only been one of the most successful and influential of French publishers, but is also a stimulating speculative writer and (what is less well known) a landscape painter of talent. In 'La Chose Littéraire' he has made a shrewd analysis of tendencies and facts in French literary life at the present time. But many of his judgments are applicable to publishing in other countries than his own, and the book is well worth the attention of all who care for the art and practice of letters. And on this very point of the individuality of the true, or, as one might say, the born publisher, he has some interesting comments.

After pointing out that all men feel the need for sharing their opinions with others, and that when their tastes are, let us say broadly, intellectual, they have an instinctive desire to secure the admiration of others for works or ideas which they themselves admire, he goes on to associate this as an animating principle in that process of acquisition and communication which constitutes the publisher's chosen labour. And he then argues that the acquisition of a work of literature by a publisher of the best kind really amounts to a process of incorporation: "The new work becomes a portion of the larger general *opus* to which he would like to put his name. . . . In a word, the 'publishing spirit' is simply one of the aspects of that need for self-perpetuation which is, perhaps, the prime need of man. Only, the durability sought by the publisher is not, as in the case of the author, for his personal work, but for the larger whole destined to carry the mark of his hand." And when M. Gresset later speaks of publishing as being in this light "a form of personal affirmation," I think he is setting the right standard to his colleagues, in whatever country—and, I suspect, a sounder one even from a quite commercial, profit-and-loss account point of view than the all-tolerant, all-providing approach to the problem which, as I felt, lay beneath the words of the London publisher I quoted.

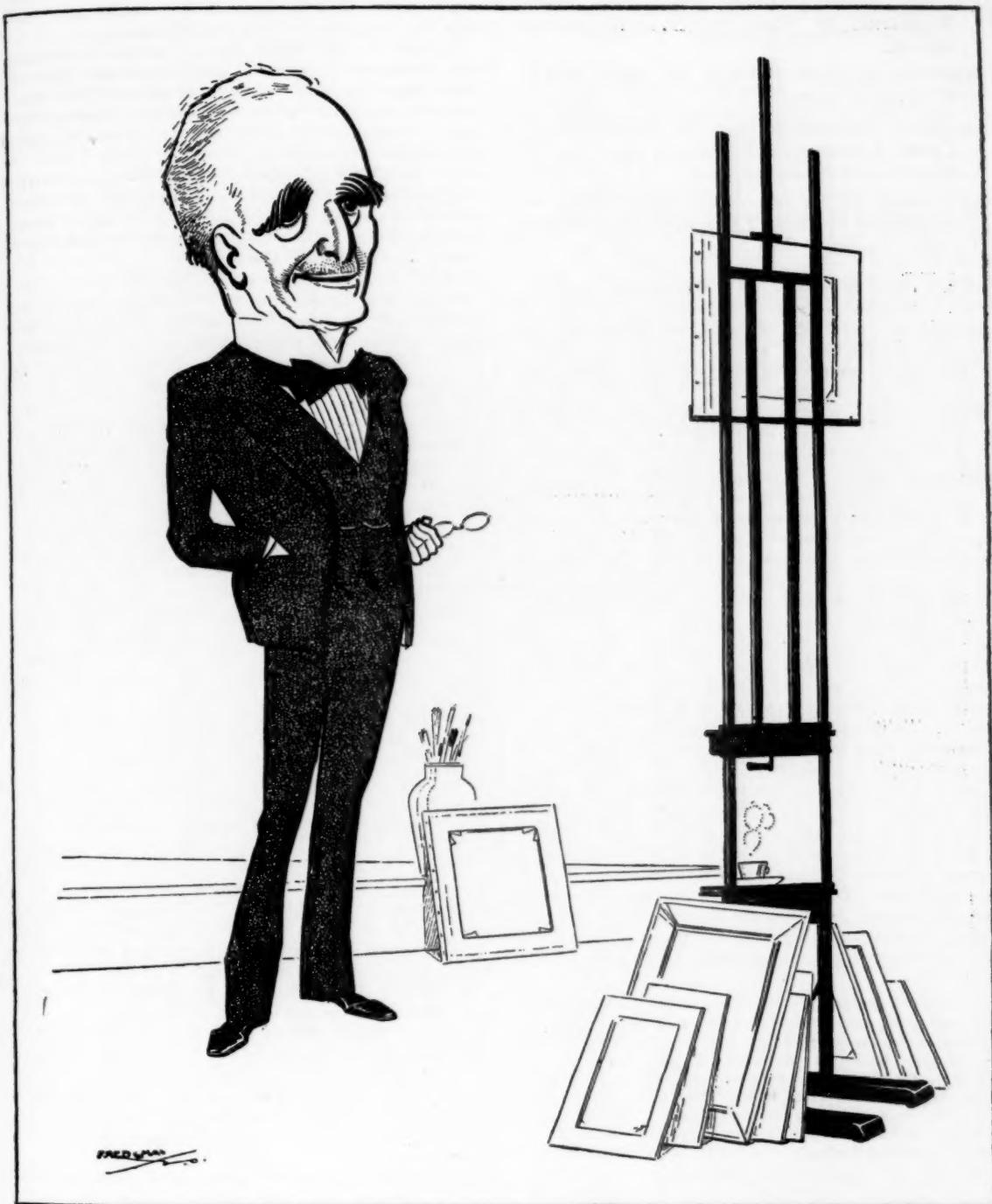
QUINCUNX

THE COUNTRY GIRL'S SONG

By G. I. SCOTT MONCRIEFF

TELL me if the true to-morrow
Lies hid beneath a swallow's wing,
Tell me if nine months of sorrow
Is worth a stranger come in Spring.

In the winter shall I rue
The pleasure that I wish to reap?
I know Love asks exacting due
From maids who would his statute keep.



SIR WILLIAM LLEWELLYN, P.R.A., K.C.V.O.

NEW NOVELS

The Good Soldier Schweik. By Jaroslav Hasek.
Translated by Paul Selver. Heinemann.
10s. 6d.

Unrest on the Home Front. By John Worne.
Richards. 7s. 6d.

Four Infantrymen on the Western Front, 1918. By
Ernst Johannsen. Translated by A. W.
Wheen. Methuen. 5s.

The Cabaret Up the Line. By Roland Dorgelès.
Translated by Brian Lunn and Alan Duncan.
Lane. 7s. 6d.

In his recent pamphlet, 'The Lie About the War,' Mr. Douglas Jerrold complained of what he described as "a farrago of highly sentimentalized and romantic story-telling" which was being "foisted on to a new, simple and too eagerly humanitarian public." Well, whatever else 'The Good Soldier Schweik' may be, there is nothing sentimentalized or romantic about it. The author's target is not so much the war as the army—in this case the Austro-Hungarian army. And being a Czech, he was able to regard that organization with a detachment which no doubt prompted him to show how it could be outwitted by semi-imbecile tactics. Accordingly, he created Schweik, who passes triumphant through all the embarrassments which the Austrian authorities had devised for the destruction of defaulters, malingerers and other luke-warm patriots. In his preface the author presents Schweik as being the average Prague man-in-the-street, but the Czechs themselves have not accepted him very wholeheartedly as a national figure. Still, whether Schweik is a typical Czech or not, he is a genuine human being, who springs into life on the very first page and soon joins the great comic characters of fiction. With his unruffled good humour and his fund of irrelevant anecdote, he recalls Sam Weller. There is, indeed, much in the book which suggests Dickens, but its general spirit is closer to Smollett. For Hasek added to Dickens the hearty coarseness which Dickens removed from Smollett, and page after page of 'The Good Soldier Schweik' reads like a picaresque novel of the eighteenth century. It is brisk in movement and rich in humour. Sometimes the author indulges in a sardonic aside such as the following :

Officers' orderlies are of very ancient origin and I am surprised that nobody has yet written a History of Batmen. It would probably contain an account of how Fernando, Duke of Almavir, during the siege of Toledo, ate his batman without salt. The duke himself has described the episode in his 'Memoirs' and he adds that the flesh of his batman was tender, though rather stringy, and the taste of it was something between that of chicken and donkey.

But for the greater part the humour is of that robust, primitive kind which needs no commentary. The author's droll verve, coupled with his power of presenting even minor characters stereoscopically, enabled him to take the raw material of the comic strip and transform it into significant satire. Schweik is, of course, the heart and soul of the book. At the outbreak of the war he was a dog-fancier who had been discharged from the army as mentally unfit. But it is not long before he again comes under the notice of the authorities and, as a result, sees life in the police cell, the lunatic asylum, the hospital and the detention barracks. Later, he becomes an orderly, first to an army chaplain, who loses him at cards, and then to an infantry officer. In the end, without getting appreciably near the firing line (the book might

almost seriously be subtitled 'All Quiet on the Eastern Front') he contrives to be taken prisoner by the side on which he is supposed to be fighting. The record of these misadventures provides much superb buffoonery and yet it is never very far from the plain, tragic truth. The book, however, would have been none the worse for a little less alcohol.

'Unrest on the Home Front,' which is concerned with dishonest contractors and incompetent heads of departments, is also satirical, at least, in intention. But what little wit the book contains is embedded in layers of facetiousness, the quality of which seldom rises above the level of music-hall patter. And the story, such as it is, flounders along through a dreary jungle of extravaganza. This is a pity, for the subject was worth treating with respect, and the author shows here and there, notably in a digression on law-courts, that he has a sense of irony.

'Four Infantrymen on the Western Front' and 'The Cabaret Up the Line' cover similar ground, and by so doing they show that between Berlin and Paris there is a great gulf fixed. With regard to the former, the publisher invites us to study the extracts from the German criticisms on the back flap of the jacket, and there we learn that, according to the *Volkswille* of Hanover, "Everything is described nakedly and with an open brutality. . . . Some of the passages in the book. . . ought to be nailed up on the Church doors," while the *8-Uhr Abendblatt* discovers in Herr Johannsen's pages what it calls "a grandiose symphony of horror." If all this verbiage is just the Teutonese for a crude farrago of blood and rant, we are inclined to agree. Once, and once only, does Herr Johannsen give the slightest hint that he is capable of anything but rank blatancy. That occurs on page 120, where, by the juxtaposition of a typical extract from a patriotic war-novel with the blunt reality, he scores a good point. All the rest is inferior Remarque. "We are a queer lot, us Four," says one of Herr Johannsen's quartet, and though ungrammatical, he was right. This queerness is made even queerer by the heavy-handed translation. Mark Twain referred somewhere to a translation which was so faithful that it hung around the original like a mustard-plaster. Here we observe something of the same kind. Thus : "Capriciously go the hazards," "You've got a rat, you four." "With such bellows to the flame they go to ashes on the wind." "That is fine from you, mother." "Wounded? Dead we are." And so on. Some of these specimens, too, rather suggest the legendary translation of Schopenhauer, for which the original had to be used as a crib.

We leave Herr Johannsen for Monsieur Dorgelès and pass from barbarism to civilization. In these fourteen sketches, which have a loose continuity of their own, the author shows that it is possible to depict the tragedy of war without aping Remarque. He can also create beings who, unlike those of Herr Johannsen, are neither inhuman nor non-human, and in Rouffignac, the scatter-brained colonel, he has portrayed a character thoroughly in the vein of Hasek. It is, in fact, remarkable how much his broad humour has in common with that of the Czech writer. As regards the translation, there are too many traces of unskilled dictionary work. And the use of slang often reveals a faulty ear for spoken English. Such a sentence, for example, as : "The blasted idiot who must have got a dent in his napper. . ." is a mere piece of patchwork jargon. Sometimes, too, the meaning of the original has been misunderstood. The worst instance is on page 62, where a French soldier is made to say : "I bought that at Panama when I was convalescing." It is excusable not to know that "Paname" in argot means "Paris," but a translator who, with that particular context to guide him, renders it as Panama, ought to be struck off whatever rolls translators may be supposed to have.

REVIEWS

THE MAN AND THE DREAMER

The Later Years of Thomas Hardy (1892-1928).
By Florence Emily Hardy. Macmillan. 18s.

THE bare, bleak face, the clothes that seemed to hang upon a figure not properly belonging to them, emphasize the contrast between Thomas Hardy the man and the imaginative writer. He himself, in his indifference to the accidents of his own life, seemed corporeally to stand apart from the works of which he was the author, as some found when meeting him, and to read this record of his days, is to accept the division as fundamental. The dreamer and the thinker who interests us must be studied in his writings, if we would become intimate with him, and those who know them well will gain nothing from his personal story. Mrs. Hardy carries this down from the mixed reception of 'Tess' and the storm that greeted 'Jude the Obscure' to the completion of 'The Dynasts' and the honours that attended his old age. The scraps of diary that she quotes are mainly jottings of events—an excursion, a visit, a dinner—and the notes for stories or poems, the philosophical ideas (or fancies, as he preferred to regard them), are the barest of bones compared with that which they became in the act of imaginative composition. Before anyone is tempted to dismiss this as an external chronicle, to be excused from his most intimate relation because Hardy would have disapproved of any other, let him consider whether it may not be the extraordinary truth: whether the poet did not live in one world and his visible counterpart in another.

This impression has more than a biographical interest, for, if it be true, it would help to explain the profound sense of discrepancy in the poet's vision of life, and the fact that his meaning was constantly misunderstood by other people. Those who were intimate with the ordinary man of every day could regard his poems as flights of imagination: those who were perturbed by the poems and their implied philosophy imagined a human being grotesquely different from the actual author. That Hardy himself could never understand why he was called a pessimist suggests that the peculiarity of his imagination was hidden from the simple human being in whom it was housed. The most interesting pages in the present volume are those which contain his own remarks on his poetry, and on the reception of it which was so strange to him, and, as his attitude is still too little appreciated, it may be well to quote him:

Perhaps I can express more fully in verse ideas and emotions which run counter to the inert crystallized opinion—hard as a rock—which the vast body of men have vested interests in supporting. To cry out in a passionate poem that (for instance) the Supreme Mover or Movers, the Prime Force or Forces, must be either limited in power, unknowing, or cruel—which is obvious enough, and has been for centuries—will cause them merely a shake of the head; but to put it in argumentative prose will make them sneer or foam. . . .

He had, indeed, cause to fear misunderstanding, for it is astonishing to learn that, so recently as 1902, his well-known ballad, 'A Trampwoman's Tragedy,' was refused by the *Cornhill* "on the ground of it not being a poem he [the editor] could possibly print in a family periodical."

I hold that the mission of poetry is to record impressions, not convictions. Wordsworth in his later writings fell into the error of recording the latter.

I do not expect much notice will be taken of these poems ['Moments of Vision']: they mortify the human sense of self-importance by showing, or suggesting, that human beings are of no matter or appreciable value in this nonchalant universe.

One of the best of Mrs. Hardy's rare comments runs:

Sensitiveness was one of Hardy's chief characteristics, and without it his poems would never have been written, nor indeed the greatest of his novels. He used to say that it was not so much the force of the blow that counted, as the nature of the material that received the blow.

Hardy's own life was smoother in circumstance, even from his boyhood, than most people realized, until the first volume of the present biography appeared in 1928, and the consequence will be that he will continue to attract biographers in the hope of drawing a portrait that shall endeavour to harmonize the outward placidity of his life, except in so far as critical abuse disturbed it, with the wounds that his imagination displayed. Here and there, in the austere chronicle now completed, occur words that suggest a great deal. After a visit to Exeter Cathedral in 1920 he wrote in his notebook: "Felt I should prefer to be a cathedral organist to anything in the world."

In his early twenties he had intended at one time to go up to Cambridge and to read for a pass-degree, but the plan was abandoned "mainly owing to his discovery that he could not conscientiously carry out his idea of taking Orders." The date should be noted, for Hardy was one of the people who were deeply impressed by 'The Origin of Species' which had appeared in 1859. We may, I think, regard him as a deeply religious man who had been disappointed in his aspirations, and as an extraordinary figure in his generation because the theory of evolution, or rather of natural selection, put forward by Darwin, penetrated without pause from his intellect to his imagination, from his mind to his feelings, long before such a change occurred elsewhere. The consequence was that he could write narrative and compose poetry penetrated by the new view, with the effect of perturbing not only those who were shocked by Darwin but even those who unconsciously felt in the old way however much they might mentally endorse the Darwinian hypothesis. Hardy was the first English writer whose imagination wholly surrendered to the change of view, and we can judge of the gulf between opinion and imaginative apprehension when we ask ourselves who, in the interval that has elapsed, approaches him in a similar saturation. In spite of the recent reaction the notion of evolution of which Darwin was the exponent is on everybody's lips, but many of those who take its truth for granted still feel in the old way and have gone no further than shedding beliefs, the emotions associated with which cling to them if only in tatters. Hardy shows us the beauty of a tragic conception of human life. The poet in him had assimilated the new theory, but in the man there lingered something of a vocation that had to be renounced. He was the first poet, she said, to spell It with a capital letter, to see the tragedy of life to consist in the emergence of creatures more sensitive than the force that had evolved them, and in human existence a progress through a world not worthy of men. He was so much at home with his conceptions that he could joke about some of the ironies, and be puzzled that nothing but his grimness was conveyed to other people. In the 'Dynasts' he tempered his austerities with the voices of the Pities, but these might have been silenced if the poem had not been finished before the war. Aiming to "express the emotions of all the ages with the thought of his own," he remained remote through this achievement, and his works rather than his life depict the crisis which religion in English-speaking countries has undergone:

I could not prop their faith: and yet
Many I had known: with all I sympathized;
And though struck speechless, I did not forget
That what was mourned for, I, too, once had prized.
OSBERT BURDETT

NOTES OF AN EDITOR

R. D. B.'s Diary: 1887-1914. Heinemann. 8s. 6d.

FLEET STREET will need no explanation of the title of this book. Outside Fleet Street unfortunately, only those who read the extracts from this diary which appeared in the *Daily Express*, and those who have been fortunate enough to meet R. D. Blumenfeld, and know him as editor and chairman of that newspaper, will have any inkling of the interest of his diary. And even those who do know him may never have suspected that the editor among them was taking notes—mental notes which nightly were transcribed into one of the most interesting and amusing diaries that has ever got into print.

And it is an honest diary. That is its outstanding characteristic, and the reason why so many of its pages make such diverting reading to-day. What R. D. B. put down twenty or thirty or forty years ago he reprints to-day—no matter how far time has falsified him as a prophet, or made his comments on men and affairs richly comic reading.

The only way to give an adequate idea of the interest of this diary, which covers the period from 1887, when R. D. B. first came here from America, to the outbreak of the Great War, is to note, more or less *seriatim*, some of its entries and let them speak for themselves and the diarist. A very early entry, in 1887, strikes the contrast between then and now. Queen Victoria's Jubilee celebrations had brought many visitors to London: and it was due to this invasion, R. D. B. suggested, that all the fashionable hotels were crowded—"and you cannot get a suite under £2 a day"! Happy days! It was in this year that R. D. B. first heard, from an enthusiastic Scotsman, of the game of golf. He was not alone in failing to perceive the fascination of a game in which "it appears that you strike a ball a long way and then walk after it and do it again."

In the 'nineties there are passing references to a number of people who have since become famous—or notorious. There was, for instance, a little matter of business—the sale of a printing press—with a Mr. Horatio Bottomley, a City accountant, and "an energetic young man who, I learn, has got control of Galignani's *Messenger*, the Paris daily, which is on its last legs." It was at about the same time that D'Oyley Carte tried to tempt R. D. B. to go and live at the Savoy Hotel, with an offer of sitting room, bedroom, bath and valeting for £2 10s. a week. "He says he is finding difficulty in inducing people to patronize the hotel. . . . At present the Savoy is given over to people from abroad, and they are not many."

A jump of ten years (in the course of which R. D. B. noted the dangers of horse bus racing, the greater dangers of motoring, and that a motor-car maker had said he would not be surprised if motor cars were used in future as much as horses) and the diarist is meeting some interesting figures who demand mention in his diary. One is Mr. A. B. Law (to become better known as Bonar Law) the new M.P. for the Blackfriars division of Glasgow, and a Canadian, but "a quiet, unassuming man with no trace of a Transatlantic accent." Another coming politician who came into the diary at about this time was Mr. Lloyd George, who had just got in again for Carnarvon. "He is thirty-seven years old, but as he is all nerves and jumps, I doubt if he will stand the racket of Parliamentary life for long. He has already been eight years at Westminster, and as he is a turbulent sort of person he is sure to wear himself out soon."

In the following year (1901) there is a mention of a young Mr. Smith, a barrister, then defending Goudie, the bank clerk concerned in the sensational Liverpool bank frauds. "Mr. Smith had an enviable university career, and I judge from his manner that he has not

forgotten it. He is a handsome, tall, athletic looking young man. I did not hear him speak, but I am told he has a most attractive voice and a most picturesque vocabulary. We hear, of course, the usual prophecies about him—Prime Minister, Lord Chancellor, and so on; the thing that is always said about promising youngsters. But young Mr. Smith is not even in Parliament yet, and has no family connexions to push him on."

This page, one imagines, will be specially interesting to Lord Birkenhead. . . . And here one must make a jump to note a meeting with another figure rather more familiar to-day than in 1908, when R. D. B. "met Rudyard Kipling with his cousin, Stanley Baldwin, the young ironmaster from the West Country, who hopes one day to get into Parliament like his father before him. . . . He is rather shy and not at all politician-like in his manner, and I do not suppose he will ever do more than follow his leaders if he ever gets in. But I should call him a pleasant, cultured, conscientious but badly dressed man, without much desire to sit in the limelight. . . ."

But one must not give the impression that this diary is all *personalia*. R. D. B. had the journalist's eye for all sorts of things, from the beginning of the banana business to the vagaries of fashion. Apparently in 1900 some agitation was caused by a suggestion that women's skirts should be shorter—right off the ground! But one no less than the great Paquin pointed out that "the short skirt, to be safely left alone in muddy weather. . . needs to be at least six inches off the ground; and who dares to wear it?" Miss 1930 is now a little agitated by the suggestion that she should not show quite so much knee. But women, even in the 'nineties and early nineteen hundreds, even before the suffrage agitations noted in the diary, were beginning to conduct themselves with shocking freedom. What did R. D. B. see in the lounge of the Carlton after dinner on December 9, 1901? Four women smoking cigarettes unconcernedly! "One of them had a golden case and she was what is called a chain smoker." But eight years later the diarist had to record an even more shocking sight, seen in the palm room of a London hotel—three women calmly smoking cigarettes and drinking cocktails, without men to accompany them. "Some of Mrs. Pankhurst's legionaries, I presume."

KENNETH KINNINMONT

DRAGONS' TEETH

A Brass Hat in No Man's Land. By Brig.-General F. P. Crozier. Cape. 7s. 6d.

HERE is a tendency in some places to pick out the lurid passages of a book and judge the whole work from them; but this method will no more show what the book is than particular incidents, depicted in a "war play," will show us what war is. The public, unfortunately, are apt to read only such sensational extracts instead of the book itself and thus gather false impressions. "The Army swore terribly in Flanders"—that is, part of it swore part of the time; but it did not all swear all the time!

General Crozier commanded successively a company, a battalion and a brigade on the Western Front from 1915 to 1918. He is thus in a better position to give us a true view of war and its concomitant circumstances than are novelists and play-writers who have at best seen only a very limited portion of the battle area; and he brings an acute intelligence to bear in drawing deductions from his experience. As the author says: "War is savage and mankind its victim"; and it is well that it should be known that there is as much of horror as of glory in all

war, and in modern war in particular. As Napoleon said: "War, to be effective, must be terrible," and it is only by a full understanding of its savagery and its consequences that nations and governments are likely in future to find other and wiser means of settling disputes. The author is all against war, but "will, of course, fight again if he has to in defence of his country."

Those who have selected isolated passages and incidents to condemn this book have certainly not done justice to the work or purpose of the author. He presents us with many gruesome scenes. But if some have had too much to drink, or a soldier has been executed for a military offence; or an unpopular N.C.O. blown up by his men; or some prisoners shot in "attempting to escape"; it is not to be supposed that such isolated incidents are characteristic of the whole drama. They must be described if future generations are to know what their predecessors had to face, and what they may have to face themselves if they depart from peace. But war is not all glorious, or all bestial. The valour, the doggedness and self-sacrifice of men fighting for their country during those wonderful years predominate, and are well brought out by the author from his own experience. These great qualities of manhood were nowhere more in evidence than in the old Regular Army which, General Crozier remarks, was "the most gentlemanly little army the world has ever seen"; and it is good to read that this hard-fighting Brigadier knew his own flank was safe when the Guards were on his left, "for the Guards never move back without orders." He tells of the non-commissioned officers of the Old Army, of which they were the backbone, "never wanting in time of danger, whether it be in shielding his battalion from the too inquisitive enquiries of some troublesome general, or in placing his body between the enemy and his country. He is always ready. He is always on the spot. When Lord K. asked the 'backbone' of the past to come forward to help him and the eager youngsters who were clamouring to fight, he knew his appeal would not fall on deaf ears. He was, as usual, right." But the author is not always just to the old "dug-out" officers who joined up from a sense of duty and not for pay or power. His own Colonel Ormerod was a noble type of these veterans.

This book is in some measure a vindication of the much-abused "Brass Hats," who were supposed never to go near the front line. Here, at any rate, is a "Brass Hat" who was often in "No Man's Land," who spent his years, as did many others, in close touch with the enemy's line and often crawled out into that Empire of Death to do his own reconnoitring. He relates some things which are better forgotten, or recalled with shame, and he paints sexual laxity in too glaring colours. "The Army," he says, "was not more moral than other sections of society." He might have said that the Old Army, which had the advantage of a long-established habit of discipline, was probably less immoral.

As General Crozier says, "Never was there such age with honour, never such ripe experience"—as in those who saw the war out. Let it not be forgotten that these were the sons of a vanished century, of the Victorian age and Victorian mothers, sometimes so slightly spoken of by the ignorant youth of the present generation. Spartan mothers indeed, whose husbands and sons perished in the flame of battle, and who are deserving of all honour and remembrance. The author of this book has done his share in war; and he now dedicates this record of his experiences as "A humble tribute to my Fallen Comrades who 'gave us Peace' and an expression of hope that we may, as a Nation, be worthy of their Sacrifice."

R. G. BURTON

THE AUTHOR OF "SALLY"

Poems of Henry Carey. Edited by Frederick T. Wood. Scholartis Press. 10s. 6d.

WHAT does Carey signify to the common reader? 'Sally in our Alley' and nothing more. His life and personality are no part of literary tradition; his other poems and his plays have been given little but mention, and not always that, in literary history. Courthope, the historian of English poetry, does not name him, and the 'Cambridge History of English Literature' is scarcely generous. An anthologist or two has printed his brilliant parody of "Namby Pamby" Philips and his drinking song:

What Cato advises
Most certainly wise is,
Not always to labour, but sometimes to play.

And many people, perhaps, know his burlesque of heroic, ranting tragedy 'Chrononhotonthologos,' as much for containing the longest word in the English language as for its merits. Till Mr. Wood tackled him, his poetry was only available to modern readers in an indifferent selection published six years ago by the Golden Cockerel Press. The first service of this edition is to add a little to our own knowledge of Carey's life. That he was a Yorkshireman was fairly evident from the scenes and material of several of his theatre pieces and the probable tradition that he was an illegitimate son of one of the Saviles. George Savile, Marquis of Halifax, is usually given the honour, though Mr. Wood thinks that it should belong not to the Marquis but to his younger son, Henry Savile. He also infers that Carey was the Henry Savile who married a Sarah Dobson at the Yorkshire village of Rothwell in 1708. This may be so, but the same Sarah can hardly, as

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Mr. Wood thinks, have been the mother of an infant born to Carey thirty-five years later.

Soon after 1708 he was probably in London, known not as Savile but as Carey, which (though it does not occur to Mr. Wood) may well have been his mother's name. In 1713 appeared his 'Poems on Several Occasions,' which was to go into two more editions, and in the next twenty years he produced a great many songs (for which he composed his own music) and several farces and burlesque operas in parody of the dramatic fare of the time. Two of them, at least, had a remarkable success.

He seems to have been good-natured and improvident, with a pretty sense of fun but none of "push" or business, to have grown fat in body and thin in purse, and to have drowned care more and more often (to use his words) in an ocean of claret. Finally, at the age of fifty-six, in circumstances unknown, he appears to have killed his four months' old baby and then to have hanged himself in his house in Dorrington Street, a tiny alley which still exists off Gray's Inn Road.

In his poems, 'Sally in Our Alley' stands as a peak achievement, simple and genuine as it is when the fashion for love lyrics was conventional and insincere. Among the rest of them, those who know Carey only in anthologies will make few finds beyond a delightful 'Whimsical Dialogue between the Author and His Favourite Mare,' and a pleasant song on the success of 'The Beggar's Opera,' but Carey emerges as a patriotic hater of sham and as another of those care-free lyric poets and human poker of fun, who, like John Gay, belie the common literary conception of the first half of the eighteenth century.

Unimportant as many of his poems are, they are marked by his pleasant personality, and were certainly worth editing, though, to be candid, the work might have been more thoroughly done. Carey is not likely to get another editor, and this volume lacks the scholarly finality it should therefore possess. It tells little of Carey's bibliography, gives no indication of the source of most of the poems, no index of first lines, no proper list of contents, and no adequate notes or adequate discussion of the doubtful pieces.

Thus Mr. Wood prints 'God Save the King' as Carey's, and though there is not a shred of trustworthy evidence for the ascription, he finds no room to discuss what is, after all, an editorially important matter. Worse still, he has omitted nearly all the songs from Carey's plays, though some in 'The Honest Yorkshireman' and 'The Dragon of Wantley' are better than scores of mediocre verses included. As it is, the edition is woefully incomplete.

GEORGE THE FOURTH AND MRS. ROBINSON

Memoirs of the Late Mrs. Robinson. Written by Herself. Cobden-Sanderson. 7s. 6d.

THE George the Fourth tradition does not give us a very happy picture: a gross old man being bled before the Ascot banquets—using God and His Angels as nothing more than a picturesque curse. The heavy roué eclipses the young Prince, walking the river bank with "Perdita Robinson," singing to her "with exquisite taste . . . the tones of his voice breaking on the silence of the night," appearing to her "entranced senses like more than mortal melody."

Perdita Robinson, painted by Gainsborough and Reynolds, Coleridge's "fairest face on earth," was the Prince's first mistress. He loved her for a little hour before he turned to new delights and left her. When Mrs. Robinson died, she left a manuscript which tells her sad and lovely story; it has been reprinted by Messrs. Cobden-Sanderson. In passing, it might be said that the printing and binding

of the book are a delight, beckoning one to approach Perdita's story with the affection and gallant sympathy she deserves.

Never was virtue retained against such odds as those which sought to destroy Mrs. Robinson. She was lovely and clever and good. Yet her schoolmistress "was frequently in a state of confirmed intoxication" and her father ran off to Labrador, with "a mistress, whose resisting nerves could brave the stormy ocean." Her first lover was discovered to be already married. Her neighbour would "turn away with evident emotion" every time that she appeared at the window, so that her mother was obliged to keep the shutters "perpetually closed."

When she was wooed by Mr. Robinson at Greenwich, herself wearing "a night-gown of pale blue lustrine, with a chip hat, brimmed with ribands of the same colour," her innocence did not allow her to know that when she was wed to him, at the age of fifteen, he would prove himself to be a rascal, loosening his affection on all and sundry and stealing Perdita's beloved watch to bestow upon a Mrs. Pye who lived in Marylebone.

Withal, the lovely Perdita shone apart from all that was vulgar and she breathed the fair air of Cranford, although Babylon pressed close around her. When she acted, with Sheridan and Garrick as her champions, a hundred pallid maggots set out to destroy the flower. Yet she remained faithful to the disgusting Mr. Robinson, with that rare virtue which some women possess, so that they are untouched even by their own indiscretions. She found herself in "the broad hemisphere of fashionable folly," but never did she relent, until the young Prince sent her a heart cut in paper. On one side he wrote: "Je ne change qu'en mourant" and on the other, "Unalterable to my Perdita through life."

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At a command performance of 'The Winter's Tale,' her "eyes met those of the Prince of Wales; and, with a look that *I shall never forget*, he gently inclined his head a second time; I felt the compliment, and blushed my gratitude."

Not until a hundred notes were sent her and not until Lord Malden had called on her, as ambassador for the ardent lover, perhaps twenty times, did she consent to as much as walking beside the river with him, even with the Duke of York and Lord Malden present. Perdita loved the young Prince; there was no harsh greed in her mind when, in the end, she consented to be his mistress. The gentle pictures of handkerchiefs being waved from the shore, of fragrant verses and guileless ardour make one hope and suppose that the Prince loved Perdita, with perhaps the one innocent and poetic passion vouchsafed to him in all his life.

He treated her shamefully and the end of Perdita's story is of the theatre, her success as a novelist and poet, and the never-ending beauty and charm, which brought suitors, almost to her death-bed. Her novels are lost in the limbo; they may be in the shadowy corners of country house libraries. But this little book, which brings Perdita back to us, is written with great charm and greater strength. There are passages on occasions written so that Miss Austen herself might not have been ashamed to pass them.

Perdita flowered strangely in her generation and she emerges from her book unspoiled by her own folly. She was gentle enough to be pleased with "the polished and fascinating ingenuousness" of the Prince, who grew to be the ogre of virtuous England; she was wise and gifted so that Sheridan, Garrick, Coleridge and Godwin were her friends.

HECTOR BOLITHO

SHORTER NOTICES

The Colonial Service. By Sir Anton Bertram. Cambridge University Press. 10s. 6d.

THIS book had its origin in a course of lectures delivered by the author at the London School of Economics in 1928 and 1929. It is based partly on his own experience of Ceylon, Cyprus, Palestine and the Bahamas, but it surveys very thoroughly the whole field of the Colonial Service and indicates the duties of its officers, from Colonial Secretary to District officer. A considerable section is devoted to the legal systems obtaining in the various colonies. Altogether this book will be invaluable to anyone embarking on a career in the Colonial Service, and even established Colonial officers will find some of its pages very helpful.

The Life of the Crown Prince Rudolph. By Baroness von Mitis. Skeffington. 21s.

IF it is possible to arouse any fresh interest in the pitiful and much pawed-over Tragedy of Mayerling, this book, by a close friend of the Prince, may do it. The mystery of the deaths of the Crown Prince Rudolph and Marie Vetsera has been so often "explained," figured in so many books of "romantic" recollections, that one almost groans at the sight of another volume devoted to the wretched business. But this book is of rather different sort. It is not meant for sensation seekers, or to appeal to those whose appetite for sordid romance can never be satisfied. It is a serious study of the Crown Prince's character and mentality, and of all the factors which led up to the suicide at Mayerling—a tragedy which, the Baron suggests, was due as much to politics as to passion. The "romance," in the light of this author's researches, becomes merely the pitiful last tragedy of an unbalanced and much oppressed mind. The Crown Prince believed that his ambitions for his country had made for his country enemies of

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other nations—particularly of Russia. He once wrote: "Russia is the menacing phantom and by the perpetual danger of war in which we live . . . one is simply devoured . . ." So far from being the prime cause of the Mayerling tragedy Mary Vetsera, in the Baron's estimation, was hardly more than incidental to it. She could neither save nor destroy a mind beset with doubts and terrors.

While there is no attempt to whitewash Rudolph, to explain away his wildness, this book does make for a better understanding of a man who here seems almost foredoomed.

Air Power and the Cities. By J. M. Spaight. Longmans. 15s.

THIS work is a sequel to the same author's 'Air Power and War Rights.' In part it is historical, dealing with the exercise of naval power against cities in the past, and this part leads to the conclusion that "there has gradually emerged in naval practice a principle of bombardment which should apply, until reason to the contrary is shown, to the operations of air forces also." Mr. Spaight is extremely stimulating in his arguments that air power can be controlled so as to become "a disarming, a preventive, a war-breaking, rather than a war-making force." But many will fail to be convinced by his arguments, however much they will hope that the limitations proposed in this book may be found practical. The essence of the author's plea is that air power should make war upon the machinery of war and those who use and make them. "Make machinery and not mankind the mark of your attack," is Mr. Spaight's slogan. He is not satisfied with the draft rules of the jurists who sat at the Hague in 1922-3. Whether his own proposals would in practice be found more practical is a matter for experts. But even assuming the acceptance of the author's principles, the chances of error in aim offer an alarming prospect for the non-combatant, non-industrial population. Mr. Spaight's interesting account of German and allied failures in hitting their targets during the war is scarcely encouraging.

Hanna. By Thomas Beer. Knopf. 16s.

IF the political activities of Mark Hanna cannot have much interest for English readers, the glimpses of a great American politician in his private and more human moments which Mr. Beer gives us will have a more general appeal. One of the two occasions on which Mr. Beer saw his hero was when "he came stiffly walking down the driveway with little Quentin Roosevelt sticking to his cane, a white moth of starched clothes chanting out a tale about a pet rat's foul misconduct." In his own childhood, Mr. Beer admits, he regarded Mark Hanna as rather a nuisance, by reason of his demands on the time of Mr. Beer, senior. This book, then, with its pleasant portrait of an outstanding figure in American history, must be regarded as coals of fire.

God Have Mercy On Us. By William T. Scanlon. Noel Douglas. 7s. 6d.

ACCORDING to the "blurb" this novel shared a prize of £5,000 in a American war novel competition—mainly on the ground of its "unflinching realism." But realism, here, would seem to be only another word for uninspired, unemotional reporting. If the prize had been for the most unimaginative war novel this book would certainly have deserved it. The narrator puts down everything in the same matter-of-fact fashion. The death of his friends is recorded with as much emotion as he shows in explaining how it was possible to chew tobacco and get rid of the salivary product—in a gas mask. For this reason the book may please some of those whose appetite

for war horrors is still unsated. They may enjoy the story of the dead German whose body was a little overripe, and could not stand being pulled into a shell hole to save the trouble of digging a grave.

... They rolled the body over on its back and two men grabbed a leg each and started to pull. They were sitting upon their haunches and they went over backwards, each with a leg in his hand—pants and all. . . . It was the first and last one that we tried to drag anywhere.

It is the reader who will flinch at some of the pages of this too realistic narrative.

Spain: Yesterday and To-morrow. By Henry Baerlein. Jenkins. 10s. 6d.

IF this book has occasionally a flavour of the guide book, Mr. Baerlein is a guide who knows his ground thoroughly, and can make it interesting. He takes us to Madrid and Toledo, to Valladolid and Salamanca, to Granada and Valencia and to a score of other places less well known to the tourist.

Sherry lovers—who are said to be increasing in numbers—will certainly appreciate his chapter on Jerez—even while shuddering, perhaps, at his account of the compound which is now exported to the United States under the label "Cooking Sherry Preparation." And it will probably be news to most of his readers that large quantities of sherry are drunk in Iceland: because it was the first wine introduced there when the island—luckier than the United States—got rid of prohibition, and the natives acquired a liking for it.

Mr. Baerlein also has some interesting things to say about the present dictatorship in Spain, and the possible future form of government. But it is for his sketches of towns and villages and their inhabitants that this book is principally interesting. It will probably increase the tourist traffic to Spain this summer.



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COLLECTORS' NOTES

THE AMERICAN COLLECTOR

ARATHER fashionable foible of our race is, one gathers, to make the worst of the times in which we live. If you have heard much conversation or read many journals lately, you may perhaps begin to doubt whether the English are among the most contented peoples of the earth, but you will certainly have become convinced that the inner circle in our midst, the world which is interested in the collection and the dispersion of examples of the antique arts—both sacred and profane—is utterly disgruntled. And among many subjects of vituperation, the grumbler finds it agreeable to attack that admirable friend of man, the American collector.

A little consideration will show how utterly absurd such an attitude really is. If one listened to the chorus of regret, if not of remorse, that fills the air when, say, a by no means invaluable work of art, such as the original manuscript of 'Alice in Wonderland,' brings a ridiculously disproportionate figure at Sotheby's, we might well suppose that the buyers for the American collectors were our financial enemies when, in fact, they are, as far as may be, the saviours of our battered society. Without the American collector where would such an absurdly over-valued picture as the 'Pinkie' of Sir Thomas Lawrence, famous, or at least notorious, a few years ago, now hide her somewhat feebly drawn head? Where would the death duties come from if a Rembrandt or a Gainsborough, a Reynolds or a Claude did not bring in a few hundred thousand dollars from across the sea? And it should be remembered that as a nation we really can afford a considerable number of sales to foreign countries, for in the late eighteenth century we more or less cornered the market in old masters and our wealth in that direction, not inexhaustible, of course, is still enormous. Again, as an altruistic people (have we not always taken it upon ourselves to police the world) we owe it to America to help in her education. Without her collectors that vast people would remain ignorant of antiquity and unsympathetic to all the arts. For it has now become the fashion for the instructed and gifted American, with plenty of money, to give much of his time and taste throughout his life to the gathering together of the antique and the beautiful and then, in the fullness of time, to hand his store of well-selected, well-protected treasures to one or other museum in trust for the benefit of his fellow citizens present and to come. In regard to the care and skill shown in the protection of antiquities the American is far ahead of us. Many of the most interesting examples of the bygone arts which we in Europe have neglected, he has saved and restored with perfect understanding and sympathy. It is in this connexion that the American collector can be especially praised, for if he appears to be a little too avid of our ruined castles and historic paintings, we may be sure that when once he has paid his often generous price for them they are safe, humanly speaking, for all time.

Our native land is, of course, a free country unlike God's Own, and so the laws which are intended to protect certain objects and places as national monuments are not inclined to prevent such fatal affairs as quarrying beneath them. A *Times* correspondent has recently gone so far as to suggest, with ironic intention, no doubt, that even that awkward memorial of the past Hadrian's Wall should be taken down, neatly numbered and sold to a foreign state whose worship of antiquity is more fervent and foreseeing than our own.

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¹ Books produced in the infancy of the art of printing, especially books printed before 1500.

² The night-winds sigh, the breakers roar, And shrieks the wild sea-mew.

³ *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*, Canto I.

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ACROSTIC No. 422.—The winner is "Carlton," Viscount Doneraile, 91 Victoria Street, S.W.1, who has chosen as his prize 'Kitchener,' by Brigadier-General C. R. Ballard, published by Faber and reviewed by us on April 19 under the title "K" the Soldier. Twenty-two other competitors named this book, twelve selected 'The Stray Lamb,' nine 'Three Daughters.'

ALSO CORRECT.—Ali, Armadale, Mrs. Robt. Brown, Bertram R. Carter, Ceyx, J. R. Cripps, Dhuall, George W. Miller, N. O. Sellam, Peter, F. M. Petty, Rabbits, Rand, Shorwell, R. Tullis, Jun.

ONE LIGHT WRONG.—A. E., Barberry, Boote, Boris, Boskeris, Buns, Mrs. J. Butler, Chailey, Clam, Coque, Cyril E. Ford, D. L., Fossil, Gay, T. Hartland, Iago, Jeff, Jop, Lilian, Mrs. Lole, Madge, Martha, Miss A. M. W. Maxwell, J. F. Maxwell, Mrs. M. Milne, Nony, Polamar, Sisyphus, Trinculo, C. J. Warden.

TWO LIGHTS WRONG.—Ernest Carr, Miss Carter, Chip, Ursula D'Ot, M. East, R. J. Fletcher, Glamis, Met, Lady Mottram, Raven, Stucco, Tyro, H. M. Vaughan, Mrs. Violet G. Wilson. All others more.

Light 9 baffled 40 solvers; Light 5, 14; Light 7, 9; Light 3, 5; Light 1, 2; Lights 6, 10, 11 and 12, 1. Light 9. A Meteor in the sense of shooting-star *flashes* rather than *burns*, and *shining* "usually implies a steady emission of light," so that Meteor is not as good as Beacon. Light 5. Sea-gull is the same as Sea-mew, but Sea-fowl is "any bird that lives by the sea."

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From the accounts you will notice that the figures are slightly better than last year. I am glad to say that the results justify our paying a dividend on the ordinary shares of 22½ per cent., less tax, after having placed £3,290 4s. 2d. to reserves (which now amount to £5,162 3s. 5d.), leaving £8,185 16s. 11d. to be carried forward. These results I think you will consider satisfactory, in view of their being accomplished in a difficult year; a luxury trade like your company's is highly sensitive to the state of general trade.

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I now have to move the adoption of the report and balance sheet for the year ended December 31, 1929, including the payment of a dividend of 22½ per cent., less tax, on the ordinary shares.

The resolution was then put to the meeting and carried unanimously.

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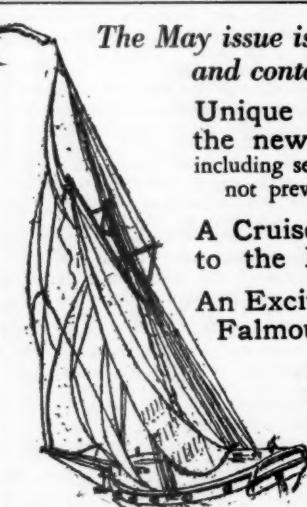
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HENRY GLAVE, LTD.

TWENTY PER CENT. IN A DIFFICULT YEAR

A POLICY OF BEST VALUE FOR MONEY

The Eighth Annual General Meeting of Henry Glave, Ltd., was held on April 29 at 80-110 New Oxford Street, W.C. (the company's new store).

Sir Arthur Wheeler, Bt., D.L., J.P. (the Chairman), presided, and in moving the adoption of the report and accounts, said: You will notice that the basis of allocation of profits which we recommend provides for the maximum dividend on the preferred ordinary shares, and for a 20 per cent. dividend on the deferred ordinary shares—for the third year in succession—and that after allocating £3,000 to reducing the amount at which fixtures and fittings stand in the balance-sheet, we carry forward a little more than we bring in.

I draw attention to this because the period under review has not been by any means favourable. As you know, building operations have been in progress and I can assure you that they have been a severe handicap to the revenue-earning capacity of this store. Apart from this, as you have read in the report, the road on our frontage—New Oxford Street—has been closed to traffic for eight weeks. Eight weeks you may think is only a very short period, but you must bear in mind that the standing charges of a store of this size are very heavy indeed, and if our sales for two months are heavily reduced it means that during that time we are actually making a loss.

SMALL PROFIT PER UNIT OF GOODS SOLD

While I am on this point of the relation between turnover or sales and overhead expenses, I must tell you that our rigid policy here is to sell the maximum quantity of goods, and to achieve that maximum two factors are essential. Firstly, we must display our wares to the best advantage, and, secondly, the price at which we offer them must be attractive.

The first condition is undoubtedly provided under our rebuilding scheme; we can to-day pride ourselves on having the best layout of its kind from the shop windows to the most remote corner of the building. The second factor, the competitive price, we attain by making a small profit per unit of goods sold—we can buy well because we buy "big." We prefer to make a shilling profit on each of forty articles rather than 10s. on each of four.

To return to the allocation, you will notice we propose placing nothing to reserve and for this very good reason. Perhaps I might first generalize and say that in any business a general reserve is created against contingencies. It represents profit set aside in one year because it is felt that in a subsequent year it may be required to enrich a poorer profit, or it is perhaps set aside and an equal sum invested in a gilt-edged security so that if some asset of the company decreases in value this amount set aside will keep the balance true. I can say without hesitation that neither of these aspects or situations concern your company to-day. In the trading of Glaves Stores we are at the foot of a rising curve and, so far as our assets are concerned, we actually have a considerable internal reserve.

Our investments in subsidiary companies, which stand in the balance-sheet at £492,260, would show an appreciation of some £160,740 if we valued them on a 10 per cent. yield basis, or, to put it another way, if we wished to provide a similar income we should have to invest £653,000 at 10 per cent. per annum. This calculation takes no account of the reserves which are vested in the subsidiary companies.

Then again our leaseholds and buildings stand at a figure more than 20 per cent. below the valuation recently placed on them by Messrs. Goddard and Smith. I am conservative in the extreme, I acknowledge the necessity for adequate reserves, but I do not make a fetish of reserve building; my board and I recognize that we are here to look after not only the interests of shareholders but the interest in their money.

FAVOURABLE POSITION AS A SHOPPING CENTRE

Now in regard to our future prospects, Glaves Stores are particularly well situated. Its frontage is on the most direct thoroughfare from the West End to Holborn and the City, and within a few yards runs Charing Cross Road, carrying endless traffic North and South. Ultimately no doubt the New Charing Cross Bridge will be built, and that will still further improve our position as a shopping centre.

Mr. W. J. Hopton, J.P. (the managing director), in seconding the motion, said that the board believed that there was a great opportunity for a large store in the West End of London offering the utmost possible value for cash only, and that, fortunately, a large percentage of the public were still in a position to pay cash and would be attracted to the store where they could obtain better values by so doing.

The report and accounts were unanimously adopted.

THE CITY

Lombard Street, Thursday

UCH interest as has been in evidence in the Stock Exchange during the past few days has, to a great extent, been monopolized by the new San Paulo issue. The terms of the State of San Paulo 7 per cent. Coffee Realization Loan 1930, to give it its official description, are generous. At the same time, the amount of £8,000,000 to be placed in London is a large one. If when dealings start, these bonds are procurable at a discount, they would appear well worth acquiring for mixing purposes. The security of the loan appears ample. Its maximum life is ten years, and at the issue price the yield to redemption is not far short of 8 per cent. The fact that the issue was made under the auspices of the houses of Baring, Rothschilds and Schroder should add to its popularity.

SOFINA

The attention of readers of these notes has been drawn in the past to Sofinettes, the name given to the one-fiftieth part of a share in the Société Financière de Transports et d'Entreprises Industrielles (Sofina). The recently issued balance sheet shows a net profit for 1929 of £664,000, taking 175 Belgian francs to the pound. Dividends of 140 per cent. are to be paid on the old ordinary shares, and 70 per cent. on the new shares, while Sofinettes are to receive approximately 18. 7d. Although the yield at the present market price is very small, these Sofinettes appear well worth locking away for future capital appreciation. The company owns world-wide electrical interests and other assets which were valued last year at approximately £28,000,000. Of this total, £8,000,000 was in cash. Whereas the balance sheet shows this cash item of about £8,000,000, its quoted participations figure at only £2,812,000—approximately less than one-seventh of their present market value. The British directors include The Right Hon. Reginald McKenna, The Right Hon. Sir Philip Cunliffe-Lister, Mr. Bernard F. Dudley Docker and Sir Edmund Wyldbore-Smith.

CENTRAL ARGENTINE

Investors who require a yield somewhat higher than that obtainable in the gilt-edged market should not overlook the recent issue of Central Argentine 5 per cent. debentures. These were issued at 89½, and, although standing at a premium, still show a satisfactory yield in view of the undoubted security they offer.

BUDLA BETA

The recent announcement as to the support which was being given to the scheme for the restriction of production of tea has imparted a firmer tone to the tea share market. Those who favour a tea share investment should not overlook the £1 shares of the Budla Beta Tea Company, Limited. This company has a good dividend record. For 1928 shareholders received 50 per cent., following 40 per cent. for 1927; 50 per cent. for 1926 and 55 per cent. for 1925, all of which dividends were paid free of tax. In November, 1929, shareholders received a free share-for-share bonus. An interim dividend of 5 per cent. was paid in December on the increased capital. Assuming that

the total dividend distribution for the year is 25 per cent. free of tax, which would compare with 50 per cent. last year on half the present capital, a yield of over £8 gross is shown at the present price of 77s. 6d. The company is noted for the high quality of its tea. The average is seldom below 2s. per lb., while during the current year the weekly average has been no less than 2s. 8d. per lb. The financial position of the company is very strong, liquid assets amounting to over £130,000.

LONDON AND LANCASHIRE

The Report for 1929 of the London and Lancashire Insurance Company Limited shows the company to have made further headway in almost every department of insurance business. The Fire department alone produced a slightly smaller premium income, but that of the Life department increased from £836,052 to £870,167, while the premium income of the marine section totalled £1,489,096, against £1,475,945, and that of the Accident and General section £2,455,736 against £2,437. Surplus profits for the year increased from £739,584 to £1,100,769, and the dividend on the share capital is maintained at 19s., or 95 per cent., as for the two preceding years. The balance at profit and loss account stands in the balance sheet at £2,193,932. Out of this the directors propose to transfer £727,862 to capital account, thus making £2 per share paid up on each £5 share. This 100 per cent. capital bonus will bring the paid-up capital up to £1,455,724. It is, moreover, the intention of the directors to increase the interim dividend for 1930, payable next November, from 9s. to 10s. per share less tax, making a total annual distribution of 20s. per share, less tax. The price of the £5 shares with £1 paid up is about 29½. They constitute a sound investment.

DUNLOP RUBBER

Holders of shares in the Dunlop Rubber Company will receive a certain amount of satisfaction in studying the figures for 1929, recently issued. These show a profit from all sources of £2,307,354. For 1928, shareholders received 20 per cent. in dividends, for 1929 this has been reduced to 15 per cent.; at the same time, last year's dividend was only paid as the result of £1,500,000 being transferred from reserves owing to the exceptional losses incurred through the abolition of the restriction on rubber. On the present occasion, no such allocation is made. £150,000 is to be placed to general reserve, £225,761 to taxation reserve, while £782,328 is carried forward against £801,278 brought forward.

MATCHLESS MOTOR CYCLES

Shares of Matchless Motor-Cycles (Colliers) Limited are procurable in the market at a premium of a few pence. The profits of the business during recent years have shown steady expansion. For 1929 they amounted to £47,858, and a dividend of 12½ per cent. was paid, earnings representing some 23 per cent. of the issued capital of the company, which consists of 804,000 5s. shares.

TAURUS

COMPANY MEETINGS

In this issue will be found reports of the meetings of Imperial Chemical Industries, Ltd., Melbourne Hart and Co., Ltd., and Henry Glave, Ltd.

NORTH BRITISH & MERCANTILE INSURANCE Co., Ltd. Total Funds Exceed £37,466,700. Total Income Exceeds £10,775,800
LONDON: 61 Threadneedle Street, E.C.2 EDINBURGH: 64 Princes Street

Company Meeting.

Imperial Chemical Industries, Ltd.

CONTINUED GROWTH IN PROFITS

POSITION OF STRENGTH AND SOLIDITY

IMPORTANCE OF IMPERIAL ECONOMIC UNITY

LORD MELCHETT ON THE COMPANY'S WORLD-WIDE ACTIVITIES

The Third Ordinary General Meeting of Imperial Chemical Industries, Ltd., was held on April 29 at the Central Hall, Westminster, S.W.

The Rt. Hon. Lord Melchett, P.C., D.L., D.Sc., F.R.S. (the Chairman), in moving the adoption of the report and accounts, said: The Gross Profit for 1929 amounts to £8,502,341, which is an increase of £504,900 over 1928 and of £1,618,417 over 1927. Your directors now recommend a final dividend of 5 per cent. actual, making 8 per cent. for the year on the Ordinary shares, and a dividend of 2 per cent. on the Deferred shares.

GENERAL STATEMENT AS TO THE POSITION OF THE COMPANY

The balance-sheet reveals a position of strength and solidity of which any company in any country might well be proud.

Only in existence for three years during a time of exceptional industrial and trade difficulty, we have shown continuous growth of profits—profits which I may say are the result of the manufacture and sale of our products, the legitimate business on which we are embarked, profits which have been obtained in a time of gradually diminishing world prices and relative non-elastic and slow moving markets both at home and abroad.

DIVIDENDS AND RESERVE FUNDS

To have achieved in three years a Reserve and Obsolescence Fund of £16,725,000 is a feat of which we can be proud.

We all realize the right of those participating in industrial ventures to obtain during their lifetime as good a return on their capital as industry can afford.

But I hope you will agree with me that you do not wish us to be precipitate in our action to adopt a dividend rate, the maintenance of which we cannot really foresee not merely for one year but for some time ahead.

EFFECTS OF GOVERNMENT ACTION

It is quite impossible in industry to-day to divorce entirely the effect of economic actions undertaken by government from the conduct of business affairs.

The monetary policy of governments, the degree of subservience in the treatment of the gold standard, the provision of credits, the expenditure of the citizen's money and the manner in which it is expended, the adjustments of the burdens of taxation, the uncertainties that are created by the tariff policy of a country being violently altered with every change of government—all these matters which affect the price of the commodities you manufacture, the prosperity of your customers, the consuming capacity of your country, the directions in which you must look for the future development of industry, and, consequently, your capital investment—the confidence, or want of confidence, which is engendered, especially the latter, which has a paralyzing action on future development—all these are factors which bear heavily both on the conduct and the results of great enterprises.

Neither technology and efficiency nor commercial ability and sagacity can counteract the disastrous economic results which may, and do, arise from unwise actions of governments.

A VAST ORGANIZATION

In our vast organization we are the servants of many industries manufacturing products and commodities which touch the lives of millions of our population.

Alkalies are dependent on the consumption of soap—glass, paper, textiles, artificial silk, detergents—all have reached the homes of this country in a thousand and one devious ways.

Our dye industry, as far as this country is concerned, is equally dependent for prosperity on the great textile industries which are themselves great consumers.

Our metal industry, cartridges and industrial explosives are affected by the growth of motor transport, the development of railway transport, the money available for sport in this country and the prosperity of our great coal industry.

Our fertilizers, as far as the home market is concerned, must have their basis on a successful and prosperous agriculture—that extraordinarily neglected step-child to whom so much lip-service is paid and for whom successive governments steadily refuse to appeal to the people of this country to give it a chance of operating on a profitable basis.

I have no hesitation in saying that if you wish to restore the agricultural and industrial condition of this country to a real state of prosperity, one of the first necessities must be reduction of the burden of direct taxation.

I cannot subscribe to the doctrine of the Chancellor of the Exchequer that high rates of income tax, surtax, etc., do not detrimentally affect industry.

When out of every pound you put by in your reserve fund from your profits year by year for the building up of your business 4s. 6d. is taken by the State—often for by no means so useful a purpose—how can anyone say that taxation does not impair the strength of industry?

There never was a period in the world's business history in which it was more necessary to enable large decisions to be taken rapidly.

Time most frequently is of the utmost importance. "Yes" or "No" must be given at once.

And on these occasions the groups of far-sighted and powerful men who are prepared to risk a very considerable part of their fortunes and who will be inclined to ask shareholders to do likewise are an essential necessity to our modern economic life.

That you can destroy with impunity the existence of such people or substitute any other form of machinery to fulfil their rôle is one of the most dangerous heresies and fallacies of a certain class of economic thought.

THE DYES POSITION

Our dye industry becomes of special interest as the Dyestuffs Act, which was passed in December 1920 and under which the British Dyestuffs Corporation was originally founded, expires in January 1931, unless, by the intervention of Parliament, new legislation is passed.

It is not surprising that the first years of this company were years of difficulty and disappointment. In fact, it can be more accurately described as a national work rather than a renumerative commercial industrial enterprise.

As you know, we have only had three years in which to tackle all the various problems connected with this enterprise.

I am glad to think that during that period we have made an altogether surprising amount of progress, more especially in the last two years.

The range of dyes required for the various purposes of modern industry is enormous.

There are over 10,000 separate dyestuffs known, and while a great many are redundant this figure serves to show the complexity of the industry.

We are to-day manufacturing and even exporting dyes of a quality equal to those made by any other firm in the world and no customer of ours has any longer any reason to complain, as undoubtedly was the case in the earlier days, regarding quality.

We have reduced prices to figures which enable the English consumer to obtain his products at world prices.

In our view the results obtained so far entirely justify the passing of the Act. The British Dye Industry to-day produces, by weight 93 per cent. and by money value 72 per cent., of the dyestuffs consumed in this country.

Before the war the industry was practicably negligible, but there are now several millions of pounds of capital invested in the industry, which employs many thousands of people directly and indirectly.

We think the period has been too short to enable us to catch up the long start our competitors have had, but we feel certain that within a given time we shall arrive, at any rate, at an equality, if we do not surpass them.

THE NITROGEN POSITION. BILLINGHAM PROGRAMME.

We have almost reached the completion of our expenditure on our fertilizer and ancillary plant at Billingham.

It is, of course, public knowledge that the whole of this plant is not in full operation.

We have never expected that the whole of the fertilizer plant we were erecting would be required immediately on completion of the plant. Owing to the rapidity of construction the date of our original programme has been considerably anticipated and in view of extensive technical improvements the capacities of the various fertilizer plants are all considerably higher than the original estimates, and the amount of surplus of each plant at the moment is larger than it would otherwise have been.

IMPORTANCE OF RESERVE PLANT

In order to maintain our relative position and importance as manufacturers we shall always in the future, as we have throughout our history in the past, have to be prepared to have a certain amount of reserve plant in existence.

We can never afford not to be able to deliver when the market calls for our products.

Neither is it possible with the most careful economic and statistical study to foretell with accuracy more than the trend over periods of the world consumption.

During the past seven years world nitrogen consumption has more than doubled. We can, however, from past experience state with certainty that there is still a great world need for the increased use of fertilizers.

There have been sudden and large increases in the demand for nitrogen in recent years and I fully expect that history will repeat itself in this respect.

DIRECTORS' SOUTH AFRICAN VISIT

One of the main objects of my recent visit to South Africa was to obtain a personal acquaintance with the working of African Explosives and Industries, Ltd., a very important associated company of ours in which we have a 50 per cent. interest in conjunction with the De Beers Company, and I was very pleased with the present position and future prospects of the company.

As you will know I personally am absolutely convinced of the importance of the development of imperial economic unity, not merely to relieve the industrial depression of this country, but also to assist the agricultural and general development of the Empire as a whole.

IMPORTANCE OF EMPIRE TRADE

My visit to South Africa has only tended to confirm my previous view. There and throughout the Empire you see the enormously wide field that lies open to trade agreements between the British producer and the British manufacturer.

We have given a great example of the advantages of industrial mergers. I can assure you that I am absolutely convinced that even much greater and more far-reaching advantages to the British people could be derived by co-operation on the lines of an imperial merger.

One of the schemes which was discussed in South Africa was the introduction into that country of our processes for the manufacture of Synthetic Ammonia and its oxidation into nitric acid for the cheapening of the manufacture of explosives. Owing to our interests and connexions with this great industry in South Africa we are able at the same time to exploit on remunerative terms to your company the result of the years of research and experiment we have carried out at your Billingham factory, and at the same time assist in the development of an important secondary industry in the Dominions which will render South Africa, which up to now has had to import Chilean Nitrate of Soda for the manufacture of nitric acid, a self-contained unit as far as this operation is concerned.

OIL FROM COAL

We have made great progress in the important field of the conversion of coal into petrol and fuel oil, by hydrogenation.

A semi-technical plant is in operation and is to-day producing first-class petrol from British coal.

We are doing intensive work on the subject, studying it particularly in this country and in other parts of the Empire, and we have every reason to hope that, under favourable conditions, we shall be able to produce high class petroleum products on a commercial basis.

We have recently had discussions with representatives of an important group of oil companies and the Standard I.G. Company of America, with a view to arranging for mutual co-operation and the pooling of knowledge and for exploitation of the process on lines which will encourage mutual progress. I am happy to say

that within the last day or two we have practically reached agreement on the points involved and we have no doubt that this agreement will be of material benefit to us and facilitate early practical progress not only in this country but in the Empire as a whole.

I need hardly point out the importance of these developments both to national and imperial defence and the future development of the coal industry in this country. They would carry with them directly and indirectly a large amount of new employment of workers in this country.

On looking at the situation as a whole, I can only repeat that we have every reason to be satisfied with the position the company has reached in such a short space of time and has maintained during the years of exceptional industrial and financial difficulties.

The balance-sheet discloses a powerful financial position. As far as we can judge our capital requirements for the present year, and probably for longer, are covered by the last issue which we have made.

CURRENT YEAR'S PROSPECTS

While it is early in the year to endeavour to anticipate the final results, and whereas it is always an unthankful task to assume the role of a prophet, especially in times such as these, still, giving you the best views on the position which I can make at the present time, I see no reason to anticipate that the present year should not give us results as favourable, if not somewhat better, than those of the year whose accounts we are presenting to-day.

Those who are partners with us in this great imperial enterprise, and on whose loyalty and support we have to rely, can rest assured that there is nothing which will not be done which foresight, energy and application can humanly do to develop still further this great concern.

There is, fortunately, throughout the entire ranks of our body a unity of purpose, a common loyalty and harmonious co-operation which become intensified as time goes on.

Surrounded as I am by colleagues of exceptional and established ability, by a staff of the highest grade of efficiency, by a band of workers unequalled in the world, I look forward with no uncertainty of hesitation to the growing expansion, the increasing prosperity of at any rate one great British industry of which I have the honour to be the chief.

STATEMENT BY SIR HARRY McGOWAN

Sir Harry McGowan said: On former occasions it has been my custom to supplement our chairman's speech, but his remarks to-day, coupled with the report issued a few days ago, have been so comprehensive and informative that it is unnecessary for me to add to them.

In a word, I would like to say that I subscribe to all he has said, but I would stress one point: that is, that your great concern is equipped in every way, technically and commercially, to take care of whatever business is offering in our many commodities throughout the world's markets, but, naturally, when those industries on which we depend for a demand for our products are depressed, we must necessarily suffer. Constant care is being continually exercised in the direction of reducing costs of manufacture and distribution, and I hope you will agree with me that it is rather an excellent achievement that we should have been able to show such a very satisfactory result for the past year, notwithstanding the general unsatisfactory conditions of business in this country and in many parts of the world.

I commend the enterprise of our staff in continuously looking for new outlets for our products. The day is past when we can sit at home and wait for orders to come to us. Members of our staff are all the time travelling the world, getting in contact with existing and potential buyers, and I can assure you that no stone is left unturned in our efforts to hold and increase our business.

As an encouragement, let me add that our sales for the first three months of this year are quite as satisfactory as those for the corresponding, and less difficult, period of 1929.

In the nature of things I possibly come in contact with more individual members of the staff than our chairman, and I would just like to say that any words of mine are inadequate to express my feelings of gratitude that we have around us a staff so loyal, keen and enterprising.

TRADE WITH RUSSIA

Publicity has been given in many newspapers to the contract we have made with the Russian Government, but I would like to remove what is, possibly, a misconception in the minds of our shareholders. It has been stated in one or two papers that we have given a loan to the Russian Government. That is not so. What we have done is to sell our products on extended terms of credit, which, however, in our opinion, are quite satisfactory, but any possible risk is adequately covered by insurance. The contract provides for considerable quantities of many of our manufactures at satisfactory prices, and we are pleased at this opportunity of giving increased employment to workers in certain of our factories.

I have great pleasure in seconding the resolution proposed by our chairman. The resolution was carried unanimously and the formal business was duly transacted.

Miscellaneous

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Education

UNIVERSITY OF ALLAHABAD

Applications are invited for the Chair of English Language and Literature in the University of Allahabad. The Professor, as Head of the Department of English, is responsible for the organization of the teaching of the different courses in his subject. His own teaching will be mainly with postgraduate students, but he will be required generally to stimulate the study of English literature in the University and should be able to guide research up to the doctorate stage. He must possess high academic qualifications, have had University teaching experience for at least five years and have established a reputation for scholarship, research and teaching ability in the subject of English. The pay will be on the scale of Rs. 800-50-1250 P.M., but an overseas allowance of Rs. 225 P.M. will be given to a candidate recruited from outside India, if he possesses exceptionally high qualifications and experience. The appointment will be permanent if the candidate be confirmed after a period of three years on probation. From the date of appointment he will be entitled to the benefit of the University Provident Fund to which he will be required to contribute at the rate of 8 per cent. of his salary, the University contributing an equal amount. The appointment will date from the day he takes up his duties in Allahabad, which should not be later than the end of October 1930.

Applications stating age, qualifications, teaching and research experience accompanied by copies of recent testimonials should reach THE REGISTRAR, UNIVERSITY OF ALLAHABAD, U.P., INDIA, by June 15, 1930. Copies of publications also may be sent.

J. M. DAVID,
Registrar.

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THE ART UNION OF THE ROYAL INSTITUTE
OF PAINTERS IN WATER-COLOURS

The Annual Draw of the Art Union of the Royal Institute of Painters in Water-Colours will take place in the Galleries of the Institute on Tuesday, May 13.

The first prize will be of the value of £100, to be chosen from pictures in the Exhibition of the Royal Institute, and there are numerous other prizes.

The tickets are one shilling each and each ticket will admit the holder once to the Exhibition. Every subscriber who takes a book of twenty tickets will be entitled to a reproduction in colour of the picture by Albert H. Collings, R.I., 'A Dainty Rogue in Porcelain.' Tickets may be obtained from Mr. Reginald Blackmore, 195 Piccadilly, London, W.

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